Accounts of interest and strategies of inter-organizational projects

Leufkens, A.S.

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TOWARDS INTEGRATIVE COLLABORATION IN THE DUTCH SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY

AUKJE LEUFKENS

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PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan Tilburg University, op gezag van de rector magnificus, prof. dr. Ph. Eijlander, in het openbaar te verdedigen ten overstaan van een door het college voor promoties aangewezen commissie in de aula van de Universiteit op vrijdag 1 februari 2013 om 14.15 uur door

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PROMOTOR:

Prof. Dr. Niels G. Noorderhaven

PROMOTIECOMMISSIE:

Prof. Dr. Henk A. Akkermans

Prof. Dr. Andrew Davies

Dr. Ubald Nienhuis

Prof. Dr. Leon A. G. Oerlemans

Prof. Dr. Andrea Prencipe

To my loving and beloved family

PREFACE

This dissertation is the culmination of the last four years of research at Tilburg University. I highly enjoyed the total of 10 years (indeed, 10!) that I spend at Tilburg University. These 10 years have made me who I am today. When I started with the Bachelor Business Studies I had no idea of the many years that I would spend in Tilburg. As my studies progressed it became clear that the regular road wasn't what I wanted, I wanted to be challenged in my studies. Therefore, I chose to do the Research Master at CentER. Doing a PhD after that was a logical step to take, even though it took me some time to figure this out. Looking back I am glad that I decided to do a Ph.D. and would not have wanted to miss the enjoyable times I have had and the challenges I have faced. What made my PhD even more special to me was the participation in the shipbuilding project. Also the support and people from the Center for Innovation Research (CIR) have made my time even more enjoyable.

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Also my former fellow PhD students have contributed to my enjoyable time as a PhD student. Youtha Cuypers, Jean-Malik Dumas, Joeri van Hugten, Mieneke Koster, David Kroon, Roland Levering, Rik Ligthart and Linda Rademaker, thank you for our chats about various aspects of being a Ph.D. student, but also for our personal conversations. It is great to have people around you to share the difficulties and challenges as a Ph.D. student, but also to share the highlights with. Roland and Rik, it was good to tackle the shipbuilding industry together. I enjoyed our endless shipbuilding meetings, interviewing interesting people and our travels to various companies. Also our trip to Montréal was memorable, to explore the city and experience a conference together.

Thijs Peeters, as we shared our office we shared all the great but also difficult times during the last four years. I respect your drive in your work and your humor, which brightened my day. Beyond any ones expectations we are colleagues again at the TU Eindhoven, so our journey will not end here. Lastly, I want to thank you that you will be my paranymph.

Miranda Bodó, we undoubtedly spend the most time the last couple of years. You have become a close friend to me. It is great to share our experiences as a PhD student as well as our personal interests, which we discovered to be very similar. I want to thank you for your perspective on life, great TV shows, and our shared love for baking and food in general. Additionally, I cherish our game nights and teas together with Peter Cziraki. I also want to thank you for standing beside me during my defense as my paranymph.

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Luckily I am surrounded by a very loving family whom I want to thank. My loving parents, mom and dad, you have always been there to support me and listen to me when I was stuck and needed a listening ear. You have contributed to who I am today. Mom, I love our endless talks and cherish your belief in me. Dad, I love your belief in following your dreams and doing what your heart tells you to do. Due to both of you I still love to come home and share good food with great conversations (as some might know).

The last but certainly not the least I want to thank is Johan. You have experienced this journey with me. I am greatly indebted to your continued love, support and belief in me. I highly respect you for your extensive knowledge in general and more specifically of the English language, which was of great use during the last revision of my dissertation. I learn something new from you every day. Thank you for your devotion, your ability to make me laugh, and making me a better person. I praise myself very lucky to have you by my side.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Industries are working more and more in project-based settings, such as for example the construction, aerospace, film and shipbuilding industry (Gann & Salter, 2000; Scarbrough et al., 2004). In addition, industries are increasingly working in inter-organizational projects. These projects involve several organizations that work on one project. These companies share responsibilities, but also have diverging interests and different levels and areas of expertise (Jones & Lichtenstein, 2008). These companies are represented during the project by individuals that take part in the project. Essential in these inter-organizational projects is collaboration (Zeng & Chen, 2003). The representatives of the companies have to collaborate with each other. How individuals and companies within the project collaborate and communicate affects the effectiveness of the collaboration (Hardy, Lawrence, & Grant, 2005). Common problem in these inter-organizational projects include additional work and rework, commitment issues and delays during the project that create ineffectiveness in the project (Bresnen & Marshall, 2000b; Rooke, Seymour, & Fellows, 2004).

In addition, inter-organizational projects are temporary by nature. The project operates for a limited period of time and is completed when a pre-specified goal is accomplished (Jones & Lichtenstein, 2008). In the papers forming this dissertation the term multi-organizational project (MOP) is used. This term stresses the often large number of companies involved in one project. Usually one company is responsible for the coordination of the project and hires other companies as subcontractors. In the project representatives of these companies collaborate during the project. When the project is completed the project team of representatives dissolves and the representatives return to their own company. The temporality and changing composition of representatives from companies complicates collaboration between these individuals and their companies. Although collaboration is essential in order to complete the project on time and within budget, it is sometimes difficult to achieve in projects. This dissertation is interested in how collaboration is shaped by the individuals and participating companies working in a multi-organizational setting.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

While collaboration in multi-organizational projects is influenced by many different factors (Bresnen & Marshall, 2000a; Kadefors, 2004) I focus on human factors. The motivation and social aspects of company representatives in a project determine how these individuals collaborate with each other (Beer, Eisenstat, & Spector, 1990). Important in collaboration is how these representatives perceive their interests (Hardy et al., 2005). Interest perceptions have a great impact on the behavior of individuals (DiMaggio, 1988; Medlin, 2006; Miller, 1999). Due to the multiple companies and individual representatives involved it is difficult to keep goals and interests aligned (Hardy et al., 2005). Some individuals might pursue their own interests at the expense of the others, while the interest perceptions of others might be in line with other participants in the project. This social dilemma is a problem that often occurs in projects with multiple companies involved (Gray & Clyman, 2003; Zeng & Chen, 2003). This brings up the question: why do individuals representing companies in MOPs perceive their interests in different ways?

In this dissertation I try to answer this question by looking at interests as social constructions. Rational choice theories assume that the self-interest motivation of economic actors is given (Weber, Kopelman, & Messick, 2004). However, these theories neglect the social nature of interest conceptions. Social science theorists argue that what individuals see as their interests is influenced by the social environment (Woolgar, 1981). Following this social constructivist perspective, this dissertation explores the social construction process of interests in relation to collaboration.

Although individuals participating in an MOP directly affect the collaboration process, these individuals do not act *qua persona*, but in their role of company representatives. Each company has its own culture and strategy in doing business. The characteristics of the company are likely to influence the behavior of its representatives in the project with respect to how they collaborate. This leads to the overarching problem statement of this dissertation:

How do social construction processes of interests of individuals and strategies of companies in inter-organizational projects relate to collaboration?

INTEGRATIVE COLLABORATION

In 2008 an initiative was set up in the Dutch Shipbuilding industry. The program that followed from this initiative is called “Integrative Collaboration”. Around fifteen organizations, shipyards and subcontractors, have joined this program with financial and managerial commitment. The aim of this initiative is to develop better collaboration models and instruments to strengthen the

competitiveness of the Dutch shipbuilding industry. In this setting integrative collaboration refers to the integration of collaboration between the different companies working in the shipbuilding industry. The program includes several areas of attention, some focusing on technological innovation, while others were more oriented towards social innovation.

This program offered the opportunity for collecting data in the Dutch shipbuilding industry. A team of researchers from Tilburg University was allowed access to meetings and projects associated with the program. During four years data were collected pertaining to projects and companies associated with the program.

PROJECTS IN THE SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY

The setting of this research is the Dutch shipbuilding industry. This industry works in projects in which the main contractor, the shipyard, hires subcontractors to fulfill specified tasks related to building a ship. The subcontractors range in their tasks from applicators, such as painters, to component suppliers of for example thrusters, to system suppliers, which for instance supply the electrical installation. These subcontractors and their associated tasks differ with respect to their influence on the process, their dependency on other subcontractors and the location of their activities. These differences make that the subcontractors have different interests and may behave differently. System suppliers are highly dependent in their activities on the shipyard as well as on subcontractors. Their systems integrate different types of equipment delivered by other subcontractors. In addition, their systems run through the whole ship, which makes them dependent on the shipyard who builds the hull of the ship. Due to the type of system, also the shipyard and other subcontractors are dependent on these system suppliers. HVAC systems supplier and electrical engineering companies are typical system suppliers. The applicator is another company that is dependent on others before he can fulfill his job. A painter is a typical example of an applicator. Due to the fact that painting is one of the last processes in the production of the ship, the painter has to wait on others in order to complete his tasks. In the situation of ‘rework’, in which tasks have to be performed again due to not meeting the quality standard, the painter also has to redo some of his work. Both the system suppliers and the applicators perform most of their activities on the location of the shipyard. The least dependent subcontractor is most of the times the component supplier. These subcontractor produce their components at the location of their own company (or at the location of their own subcontractors), and only the commissioning takes place at the shipyard. Due to their low interdependence with the process, they are only minimally influenced by the activities of other subcontractors. Of course other subcontractors can

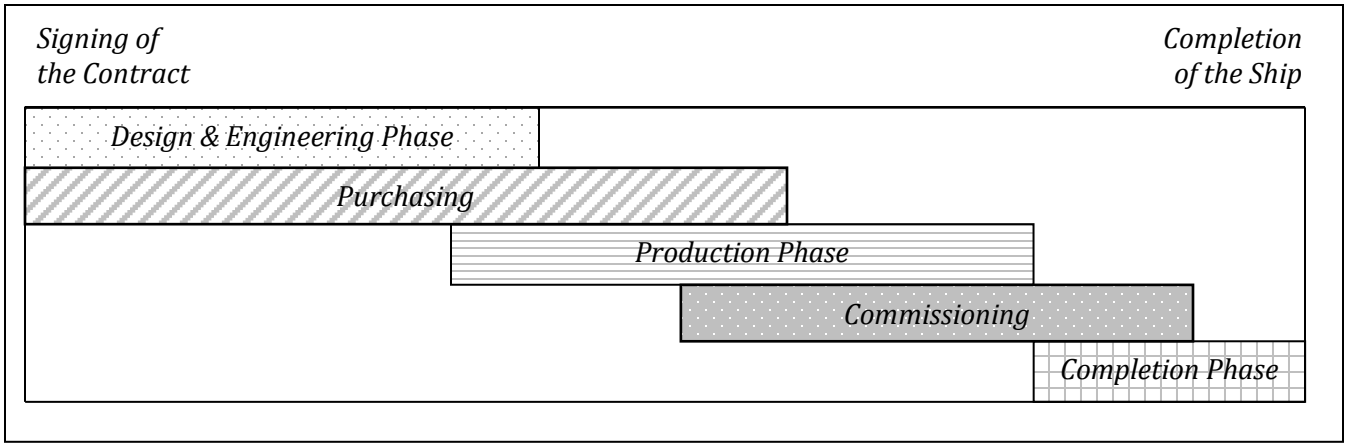
be dependent on this component supplier as certain components need to be installed before the production moves forward. Examples of component suppliers are thruster suppliers and engine suppliers. Additionally, the dependency between parties is related to their specific investments made by a party (Bensaou, 1999). While some companies use materials that can be used in many different industries, others have equipment and thus investments specifically used in the shipbuilding industry. These investments make these types of subcontractors more dependent on the industry.

The project of building a ship has several phases. The project life cycle of the ship starts when the shipyard receives the order for a ship. Subsequently, the shipyard chooses the subcontractors that will participate in the construction of the ship. The shipyard and some of the subcontractors start the design phase in which the shipyard and some of the subcontractors draw and design the ship. During this phase also the purchasing of the materials start. This includes basic materials such as bolts and nuts. As the design progresses and more information becomes available also the bigger equipment is ordered. The following phase starts with the construction and assembly of the ship. This phase takes place at the location of the shipyard, so the representatives from the subcontractors that work on the ship are located at the shipyard during this phase. During production the commissioning of the electrical components also starts and the purchasing of equipment continues. After the completion of the production the finishing of the ship starts in which all the remaining issues with the ship are solved. After this phase the ship receives a trial sail to test the functions of the ship. When the trial sail is completed successfully the ship will be handed over to the client. After the completion of the project the representatives return to their own company. Figure 1.1 illustrates the project life cycle of a ship. Notwithstanding the project-based nature of the industry, most companies have a long history of working together. This common history also influences their collaborative behavior. In most of the projects interviewees refer to their previous experiences with individuals and companies to explain why project participants behave in a certain way.

This dissertation examined different projects at different shipyards at different phases in the projects. The data in chapter 2 was collected after the completion of the four copy ships. During the interviews the respondents were asked to look back at the different ships and the process of the completed projects. These four ships were built at two different shipyards, shipyard A and B. The data in chapter 4 is collected as the project progressed. The data collection took place during the design and partially during the production phase of one project. The design and production phases

of this project took place at different locations. This project was part of shipyard C. Shipyards A, B and C were also part of the data used in chapter 5.

FIGURE 1.1
Project Life Cycle of a Ship



DISSERTATION STRUCTURE

The next chapter of this dissertation (Chapter 2) is based on a pilot study that examines the perceptions of interests in MOPs and the ability to learn to collaborate. In this chapter the factors that influence the perceptions of interests are explored. Additionally, with the use of interviews from all participating companies associated with the construction of four ships that were assumed to be copies of a vessel built earlier, the relationship between the social construction of interests and the capability to learn to collaborate effectively is examined.

Chapter 3 is a conceptual paper that theorizes how "consummate collaboration" (distinguished from "perfunctory collaboration") is influenced by social construction processes. More specifically, the chapter explores theoretically how discourse through the construction of interests is related to collaboration. Different kinds of discourse are argued to be related to different types of collaboration. This brings up the question how discourse congruent with consummate collaboration may be expected to arise. Hypotheses regarding the likelihood that particular accounts of interest are produced by particular types of actors under particular conditions are formulated.

Whereas Chapter 3 is purely theoretical, Chapter 4 is an empirical study in which perceptions of interests are linked to differences in collaborative behavior. By studying the construction of one

large ship over a period of eighteen months, insights into the social construction of perceptions of interests over time are gathered.

After looking at individuals participating in MOPs in chapters 2, 3 and 4, Chapter 5 takes a company perspective. In this chapter the strategic intent of companies working in MOPs is explored using a mental map approach. The contents and structural position of elements related to collaboration in the mental maps of managers responsible for business units are explored.

The dissertation concludes with a chapter in which general conclusions across the various studies are drawn.

CHAPTER 2[1]

LEARNING TO COLLABORATE IN MULTI-ORGANIZATIONAL PROJECTS

ABSTRACT

Behavior in multi-organizational projects has the characteristics of a social dilemma. In a social dilemma parties choose between the non-cooperative strategy of pursuing their own interests and the cooperative strategy of pursuing the collective interests. All parties are better off when they all cooperate than if they all defect, but individually they are better off if they defect. The possibility to realize a collaboration strategy depends on how those involved in the project define their interests. In this paper it is proposed that these interests are socially constructed. In an empirical study of multi-organizational projects in the Dutch shipbuilding industry this paper inductively explores the relationships between social constructions of interests and the capability to learn to collaborate more effectively. By identifying mechanisms at both the organizational and the project level this study makes a first step towards the articulation of a theory of social construction of interests in the context of multi-organizational projects.

[1] This chapter is the result of joint work with Niels Noorderhaven. It appeared in 2011 in the **International Journal of Project Management**, 29 (4): 432-441.

INTRODUCTION

An increasing number of organizations is working in project-based settings (Gann & Salter, 2000; Scarbrough et al., 2004). In project-based settings the production process is organized around projects, usually for the production of one-off products, and operating in coalitions of companies (Gann & Salter, 2000; Hobday, 2000). Although the products are each unique, companies may over time collaborate on multiple projects. In these settings learning within and across projects is important for the competitive success of the organizations involved (Brady & Davies, 2004; Levinthal & March, 1993). Also for the progress of each individual project it is essential that the organizations learn throughout the project (Cherns & Bryant, 1984). Different types of inter-organizational learning can be distinguished (Inkpen & Tsang, 2007). This paper focuses on learning aimed at collaborating more effectively (Doz, 1996; Knight, 2000). For this to occur, organizations must learn both about the general processes of successful collaboration and about the specific characteristics of their partners (Inkpen & Tsang, 2007).

However, multi-organizational projects constitute a context in which learning is particularly difficult (Hobday, 2000). In multi-organizational projects (MOPs) representatives from several organizations have to collaborate during the execution of the project, forming a multi-organizational project team. This multi-organizational team dissolves after every project to be reformed, often in a different composition, for the execution of a new project. Learning within the project is difficult because activities are distributed over several companies. And even if learning within the project takes place, there is the risk that mistakes are repeated when the lessons learned are not transferred to following projects (Brady & Davies, 2004). Moreover, the temporary nature of the project team may decrease the commitment of the organizations involved to collaborate effectively. Even though the organizations need to collaborate for the duration of the project, exchange of experience and sharing of knowledge and information between the different organizations necessary for learning may be jeopardized (Brady, Marshall, Prencipe, & Tell, 2002). The temporary nature of the project may focus organizations on short-term gains for their own organization over long-term collective gains for all organizations collectively within and across projects.

A crucial issue with multi-organizational collaboration therefore is the possibility of clashing interests of the parties. In an MOP each party is an independent company with its own goals (Artto, Kujala, Dietrich, & Martinsuo, 2008a). Thus each party has its own interests, as well as its own perspective on the interests of the others (Medlin, 2006). Individuals within the organizations are driven by the utility of their actions in order to pursue individual or organizational interests

(Rowley & Moldoveanu, 2003). Self-interests have a great impact on the behavior of individuals (DiMaggio, 1988; Miller, 1999; Van Vugt, 2009), and it may be assumed that also the self-interests of the representatives of organizations in a project team influence their behavior. What is essential in collaboration is that the organizations overcome their conflicting interest and focus on their common interests that are centered around the project goals (Bresnen & Marshall, 2000a; Clegg, Pitsis, Rura-Polley, & Marosszeky, 2002). Thus, the collaboration between the different parties of the MOP is dependent on the interests of the organizations.

Project-based settings where multiple organizations have to cooperate to finish the project bear the characteristics of a social dilemma (Zeng & Chen, 2003). Two properties hold for a social dilemma: a) each individual receives a higher payoff for the socially defecting choice than for the cooperative choice, no matter what the other individuals do; b) all individuals are better off if all cooperate than if all defect (Dawes, 1980). However, although mutual cooperation leads to a higher payoff for all group members than the mutual choice for non-cooperation, an individual can receive a higher payoff in the short-term if he does not cooperate (Weber & Murnighan, 2008; Wit & Kerr, 2002). These characteristics can also be recognized in MOPs such as in the construction or shipbuilding industry. The tension between cooperation and competition as seen in a social dilemma can also been seen in multi-party collaboration forms, such as interorganizational alliances and MOPs (Larsson, Bengtsson, Henriksson, & Sparks, 1998; Zeng & Chen, 2003). In an MOP organizations and individuals also have two options. They can collaborate and choose for the cooperative choice that focuses on the interests of all organizations. The other option they have, is that they decide not to collaborate and choose the competitive strategy that puts their own interests ahead (Wong, Cheung, & Ho, 2005).

What does it mean in this context to make the cooperative or non-cooperative choice? Collaboration, or the cooperative choice, infers a process in which organizations and individuals come together to interact for a mutual gain or benefit (Smith, Carroll, & Ashford, 1995). In addition, the participating organizations and individuals should have the willingness to collaborate by aiming for the joint interests of the participating organizations (Ring & Van de Ven, 1994; Zeng & Chen, 2003). This choice prioritizes the collective interests. Defection, the non-cooperative or competitive choice, means the choice that satisfies the individual interests, even if this harms the collective interests. Defecting in an MOP involves choosing the action and behavior that does not have the intention of maximizing the joint interests but instead focuses on only individual interests.

A difficulty with a social dilemma is that although the highest payoff occurs when all organizations collaborate no one wants to be the ‘sucker’ who puts himself in a vulnerable position

by being the first to collaborate without the certainty that the others will collaborate as well (Brady et al., 2002; Kollock, 1998; Lanzara, 1998; Miller, 1999; Weber & Murnighan, 2008).

Although the social dilemma literature assumes that interests are objectively given, this paper will consider the possibility that effective collaboration depends on subjectively perceived interests, and that these perceptions are influenced by the social environment (Scott, 1987). An individual's perception of interests is associated with desired or anticipated future outcomes. Individuals tend to look at each other to decide what a logical, acceptable definition of self-interest is. If other players are perceived to give priority to their individual gains, even if at the expense of the project, this will likely also guide one's own behavior. In the context of a social dilemma the relative emphasis on short-term versus long-term gains plays an important role. If all parties perceive the others to focus on short-term gains, this will be seen as rational, and a suboptimal outcome is unavoidable. However, if other parties are perceived to focus on longer-term gains, this is more likely to guide one's own behavior, too, and the social dilemma dissolves (Pruitt & Kimmel, 1977; Zeng & Chen, 2003). In particular in situations where collaboration patterns have not stabilized yet individuals have difficulty deciding where their self-interest really lies (Lanzara, 1998). In these situations perceptions of interests of self and others are likely to strongly influence behaviors, and changes in these perceptions are often necessary in order to learn to collaborate more effectively.

This paper believes that these issues go to the core of the problem of learning to collaborate effectively in a multi-organizational project. Hence the research question is:

What are the factors that influence perceptions of interests in multi-organizational projects, and how do these perceived interests affect the ability to work together effectively?

In this paper, following a path paved by a few researchers (Justice, 2006; Kleppestø, 2005), it is argued that interests in the context of multi-organizational projects are social constructions. This implies that the perceptions and the behaviors of individuals in organizations in this context are influenced by the behavior of individuals in other organizations (Kelley & Stahelski, 1970c). It is purported that it is not a-priori clear to the individuals representing organizations in such projects what their roles should be and what interests they should pursue. Rather, these individuals decide in interaction with their relevant social environment what are rational and appropriate interests to strive after. This is in line with social constructivist and institutionalist perspectives on organizations (Gergen, 1985; Gioia, Schultz, & Corley, 2000; Kleppestø, 2005; Scott, 1995, 2008).

This paper will discuss more in detail in later sections how the process of social construction of interests takes place. At this point it is important to explicate how the analysis of the influence of socially constructed interests relates to other important factors affecting multi-organizational projects, particularly more formal factors, such as the contracts linking together the organizations involved in the project. At first sight, such formal arrangements may seem to be more formative of interests than vice versa. After all, formal contracts define interests. But one could also say, conversely, that the step to more collaborative forms of contracting (such as partnering and alliancing contracts) can only be made if the parties concerned first define their roles and interests accordingly (see, e.g., Bresnen & Marshall, 2000a; Critchlow, 1998; Myers, 2001). This discussion is not pursued here, but it is assumed that an exploration of social construction of interests in multi-organizational projects is relevant, in its own right, as well as possibly as a factor associated with the formation of collaborative forms of contract.

The aim of this paper is to contribute to the articulation of a theory of factors influencing the ability of organizations to learn to collaborate more effectively in multi-organizational projects. The focus is on projects for the execution of unique and complex tasks because in these tasks there is the most potential for increasing the collective gains from the project. At the same time these projects, which often have a long duration, can create specific conditions that hamper learning to collaborate. The shipbuilding industry operates in multi-organizational projects that are characterized by social dilemma properties. This industry therefore presents a suitable empirical context. This paper empirically explores several projects from two different shipyards in the Dutch shipbuilding industry, to help flesh out the relationships between social constructions of interests and the capability to learn to collaborate.

INTERESTS AND PROJECT RELATED BEHAVIOR

In the previous section social dilemmas were described as situations in which participants have to choose between pursuing their own interests by choosing a non-cooperative strategy and pursuing the collective interests by following the cooperative strategy (Fleishman, 1988; Van Lange & Joireman, 2008; Wong et al., 2005). However, these interests are not just formed objectively (Ahola, 2009); individuals behave according to their definition of their own interests as well as their perceptions of the interests of others (Axelrod & Keohane, 1985; DiMaggio, 1988; Kelley & Stahelski, 1970b; Medlin, 2006). Each individual may have a different perspective on what actions and outcomes represent self-interests and collective interests (Medlin, 2006). Hence the social dilemma is a social construction arising from the perceptions of interests (Kelley & Stahelski, 1970c, 1970a;

Scott, 1987; Wong et al., 2005). This collective social construction can be a product of design, as in the project alliance studied by Clegg and colleagues (Clegg et al., 2002; van Marrewijk, Clegg, Pitsis, & Veenswijk, 2008). These authors describe how through the manipulation of incentives and material as well as symbolic aspects of the project culture individual participants' interests were subordinated to the collective project interest. As will be clear from the description below, in the context of this study there was no central authority aiming at such manipulation. Instead, any subjugation of individual to project interests needed to come from decentralized efforts. Hence this paper is interested in the question why and how processes of social construction of interests of parties in multi-organizational projects make a collaborative solution to the social dilemma more or less attainable.

Looking more closely what it means to say that interests are "socially constructed". Berger and Luckmann (2002: 43) describe the process of social construction of reality as follows: "A watches B perform. He attributes motives to B's actions […]. At the same time, A may assume that B is doing the same thing with regard to him". The important elements in this description are the mutual observation and the attribution of motives. The attributed motives refer to interests. Hence, in a social constructivist view actors construct their interests by looking at each other and by responding to what they see (Scott, 1995: 137). In this way perceptions and actions based on these perceptions are constitutive of the choice the participant organizations make with regard to collaboration. An example helps to make this clear.

In an analysis of business district improvement projects Justice (2006) shows that many individual business owners initially have a narrow conception of self and interests. This is associated with a lack of willingness to engage in collective efforts to improve the business district, an activity that ultimately is to the benefit of all. However, Justice (2006) also shows that socially constructed interests are malleable. This was in particular the case in self-governed improvement projects (i.e., improvement projects not managed by municipal governments).

> *[These projects caused] participants to develop understandings of themselves, their interests, and their situations that [led] them to greater cooperation. Through more intensive, widespread, purposive, face-to-face interactions, participants in self-governing [business district improvement projects] constructed understandings of their identities and interests that made cooperation both a natural-seeming way to serve their own interests and an inherently rewarding activity* (Justice, 2006: 35)

Turning to the empirical context, MOPs in the shipbuilding industry, this paper purports that three factors are likely to influence the social construction process: the explicit and implicit guidance that individuals participating in the project receive from their organization, the observed behaviors of others within the focal project, and personal experiences beyond the focal project.

Firstly, individuals participate in the project on behalf of their organization, and hence are likely to receive instructions regarding their project-related behavior. Instructions do not always have to be explicit. In many cases individuals participating in projects will accept as self-evident what is expected from them by their organizations on the basis of observations of what behaviors tend to get rewarded and sanctioned. The organization may discipline the boundary spanner through formal control mechanisms or the inculcation of organizational norms, or both (Adams, 1976). Organizational instructions to project participants, in turn, can be expected to be linked to the strategic role that the organization has defined for itself.

In many sectors technological and other developments destabilize given role sets of incumbent organizations. As a consequence, these players may come to question their existing strategy and redefine the 'architecture' of the industry. Industry architecture refers to 'the templates that determine "who does what" in a sector' (Brusoni, Jacobides, & Prencipe, 2009: 211). New roles are strongly associated with new knowledge and technologies, and each organization has to decide what role it can and wants to play, in relation to the knowledge it has or wants to acquire. A particularly important question in many sectors is who takes on the role of 'systems integrator', i.e., who has the capability to design and integrate internally and externally developed components (Brusoni et al., 2009; Davies, 2004; Takeishi, 2002). The role or strategy an organization wants to implement will influence the incentives and directions the organization will give to its representatives in a multi-organizational project team. These instructions and incentives may be geared towards the immediate interests of the own organization (e.g., in case the organization defines its own role as that of a subcontractor), or more towards the overall collective project interests (e.g., in case the organization defines its role as that of a co-maker). The time perspective employed plays an important role here (Medlin, 2006). A short-term strategic orientation often emphasizes the individual organization's immediate interests, even if at the expense of the collective project interests (Ahola, 2009). In a long-term perspective, if organizations anticipate to collaborate across a series of projects, the conflict between organizational and collective project interests dissipates (Bresnen & Marshall, 2000a).

Secondly, individual project-team members observe behaviors of other individuals in the project, and will define their interests based on these observations. If they witness, for instance,

that other individuals strive after their own interests at the expense of the project, they will be more likely to also define their own (and their organization's) interests in such a way (Fleishman, 1988). Ahola (2009) studied responses to 'critical incidents' in multi-organizational projects, and reports that the observed behaviors of other parties has a strong influence on future collaborative behavior. Knight (2000) observed in a case study of two supply relations that at the level of the individual employee beliefs, knowledge and motivating factors (i.e., the personal stake) specific to a particular supplier strongly influenced the quality of the interorganizational relationship. An important factor identified by this author was "personal reliance": the extent to which the individual needed the relationship to attain personal goals (i.e., what this paper calls perceived self-interest). "Those managers […] who *needed* the contractor to perform well seemed capable and willing to collaborate" ((Knight, 2000: 132, emphasis in the original). To the extent that individuals identify a common interest they will be better able to collaborate (Engwall & Jerbrant, 2003). Barriers between the organizations represented in the project team, due to divergent interests and contractual roles, can be easier overcome if there is a sense of common purpose (Gann & Salter, 2000).

Finally, it is expected that personal experiences of individual project members beyond the focal project will play a role (Grabher, 2002). In particular positive or negative experiences with the same organizations in previous projects may be expected to have a bearing on the definition of self-interest in the focal project. This idea is closely related to the literature on experience-based interorganizational trust (Gulati, 1995; Shapiro, Sheppard, & Cheraskin, 1992). Analogous to the relationship between positive prior experiences and the propensity to trust, it is posited that positive experiences with a specific organization or individual prior to the focal multi-organizational project increase the likelihood that a project member will perceive his or her own interests to be aligned with the collective interests at the project level.

DATA AND METHODS

The goal of this paper is to contribute to the articulation of a theory of social constructions of interests in multi-organizational projects. Following the spirit of grounded theory development, our data collection was based on the general perspective sketched above rather than on a preconceived theoretical framework (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This study asked broad, open-ended questions pertaining to interests, as well as some other questions pertaining to causes of problems in the projects and possible remedies. As this study was guided by a social-constructionist perspective the interviews were not used to reconstruct an objective reality but to explore how our interviewees

constructed and acted upon their views of reality (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This empirical study aimed to identify examples of the three processes of social construction of interests described above. These three process of social construction of interests are used as "sensitizing concepts" (Blumer, 1954). These concepts are not definitive in nature but give a direction along which to look. They provide a starting point for the research with respect to interests (Bowen, 2006). Furthermore, this study tries to ascertain what forms these processes of social construction of interests could take, and what mechanisms play a role. Moreover, this paper endeavored to gauge the relative importance of the various social construction processes. If a particular type of factor is spontaneously mentioned more frequently than other factors, it may be concluded that this factor is particularly salient to the interviewees, and therefore probably also especially impactful.

Research Design and Setting

This paper studied projects in the Dutch shipbuilding industry. In the shipbuilding industry the main contractor, the shipyard, traditionally hires the subcontractors such as the electricians, painters, and suppliers of components such as engines, thrusters and electrical installations. For every ship that is built, different subcontractors of different specializations can be selected to form the new project team. Every shipbuilding project thus can have its own combination of subcontractors (Gann & Salter, 1998, 2000).

At present the traditional structure of the shipbuilding industry is subject to changes. This is particularly true of that part of the Dutch shipbuilding industry that specializes in complex, custom-made ships, e.g., for the offshore sector. In these specialized ships complex components like dynamic positioning systems and diving installations need to be integrated. The shipyards no longer have all the knowledge necessary for fulfilling this integrator role, with the effect that many project outcomes are suboptimal (behind schedule, over budget, or with functional imperfections). To overcome these problems a number of organizations (suppliers, subcontractors and shipyards) in the Netherlands have united to work towards what is called "Integrative Collaboration" ("*Integraal Samenwerken*"). Although the Integrative Collaboration group has multiple aims a common thread is that to safeguard the future of the Dutch shipbuilding sector, a shift to an emphasis on shared project responsibilities is necessary. In this paper's terminology, the organizations in the Dutch shipbuilding industry want to reconstruct their interests in order to focus on the common project goal instead of focusing on their own organizational interests. The present study was a pilot project for a larger, longitudinal study of the factors that influence the Dutch shipbuilding sector's capability to learn to shift to integrative collaboration.

Data Collection

The data comes from thirty-nine interviews in two rounds of data collection. In the first part of the study twenty-four interviews took place with a total of fifty-six representatives from fourteen organizations involved in the construction of a series of four ships. These include eleven external organizations, such as blasting and preservation companies and the companies responsible for delivering and installing, e.g., thrusters, as well as two divisions with separate profit responsibility. Additionally, representatives of nine internal departments of the shipyard were interviewed.

At the shipyard where the first part of this study was conducted, four ships have been built in the last couple of years that were sold as copy ships. This means that the ships contracted to be built for the clients were initially planned to be copies of a ship constructed earlier. Due to the fact that the four ships were initially thought to be copy ships (although in practice this proved to be not the case), almost the same organizations were involved with building each ship. This created an opportunity to look at the learning regarding collaboration that occurred across these four projects. The interviews took place after the completion of the four ships. A difficulty with asking about past behaviors is that issues with the last ship were probably more present in their minds, and might have distorted their perspective on issues in earlier ships. The four ships were mostly built consecutively. The original idea was to build one after another, however, due to some problems at the second ship, production of the third ship started before the second ship was finished.

The shipyard building these four ships is organized as a corporate group with two semi-independent production locations and a number of divisions (e.g., for piping, and for the production of metal sections) that have profit responsibility, and a number of different departments (e.g., Engineering, Purchasing, Production). Representatives of all parties involved in the four projects, both internally (at the shipyard) and externally were interviewed.

In the second part of the study fifteen interviews with representatives from several departments of another shipyard, as well as its most important suppliers were conducted. These interviews were not focused on particular projects, because this shipyard and its suppliers were involved in multiple projects over time. All interviews were recorded and later transcribed. Table 2.1 gives an overview of the numbers of organizations, interviews, and interviewees.

TABLE 2.1
Number of Parties, Interviews, and Individuals

	Number of Project Parties Interviewed	Number of Interviews	Number of Interviewees
Shipyard I			
Internal departments of the shipyard	9	10	22
External parties	11	12	29
Sister companies	2	2	5
Shipyard II			
Internal department of the shipyard	7	7	7
External parties	5	8	8
TOTAL	***34***	***39***	***71***

The first round of interviews consisted of open-ended questions that revolved around several general themes related to collaboration. Examples of questions were, "What is your personal feeling about the collaboration in this project?", "Can you give us examples of positive or negative incidents that influenced the collaboration between the different parties in the project?", and "Are there differences in interests between your organization and another organization that influenced the collaboration between these organizations?" (see Appendix I for the interview protocol).

The second round of interviews was focused more on issues related to interests. Questions such as "Do you have the feeling that there are differences of interest in the project?" and "How do these differences of interest reveal themselves in the project?" were asked.

All interviews were held at the premises of the interviewees' companies. All interviewees had managerial status in their organization, including both team leaders as well as higher-level managers. During the first round of interviews usually several people from the same organization were present at an interview to make the perspectives more representative for the focal organization. The unit of observation was the organizational level. This choice was made because the aim was to get a complete and consistent view of the organizational interests involved. Together the individuals represent the perspective of the organization as the aim of the research was to explore collaboration between companies. The disadvantage was that the presence of several representatives from one organization in one interview may have been a barrier to the individual perspectives. Individuals may be more inclined to discuss only the organizational interests when other people from their organization are present. This might be the reason that individual interests were hardly mentioned. We adapted our data collection in the second round of

interviewing. In this round only a single respondent was present in each interview to be better able to get a sense of interests at the individual level.

Analyses

Guided by the three broad types of social construction this study expected to be present, the interview data was inductively analyzed. The research started with several sensitizing concepts (Blumer, 1954; Bowen, 2006). These sensitizing concepts were taken as a starting point to guide the research. These concepts were not defined clearly yet, so as the interview progressed the boundaries of these concepts became clearer. The first concept was based on the notion of roles of a company in a project (Brusoni et al., 2009). This concept led to the idea representatives being instructed by their companies in line with these roles. The second sensitizing concepts was interest construction based on observations (Fleishman, 1988). This concept was more clearly defined in the literature and therefore needed less defining. The third concept that was used was based on the role of personal experiences (Grabher, 2002). These three sensitizing concepts were used to explore the processes of social construction of interests.

The data is analyzed at the organizational level. The steps in the analysis were as follows. First all the transcriptions were read to get an idea of how the interviewees perceived the projects and their relationships with the other participants. Next the focus was on the identification of interests, and all the text fragments in which interviewees, directly or indirectly, referred to interests of self and others were marked. This study was particularly interested to see if the characteristics of the social dilemma would resonate in the interviews. In the subsequent step the text fragments were coded, when possible, as examples of interest constructions associated with organizational instructions, with observations of other project participants, and with previous experiences (outside the context of the focal project). In the final step of the analysis the text fragments within each of the three types of social construction of interests were looked at, to see if different subtypes or mechanisms could be identified. Moreover, the interviews were scanned to see if proposed solutions to the social dilemma were found. In Appendix II a coding example is given to illustrate the coding process used in this dissertation.

FINDINGS

The first round of interviews showed that in the construction of the four “copy” ships interests were closely linked to the interaction patterns in these projects. Participants were inclined to focus on their organization’s interest instead of the interests of the project. This was caused, first of all,

because at the pre-contractual phase the shipyard, based on the false believe that the ships to be built would simply be copies of an earlier order number, failed to ask or fully take into account inputs from the side of suppliers. The result was a contract that in most cases specified the separate inputs to be delivered, but not always sufficiently the interfaces between the various components. This led to disruptions of the construction process that increased costs, which the shipyard tried to shift to the subcontractors, who in response restricted their role to what formally was contracted, even if this led to further problems. Hence, clashes of interests were clearly present and openly discussed in the interviews. Also in the second round of data clashes of interests came to the fore in the interviews. Some participating organizations were nevertheless seen as highly collaborative and inclined to focus on the project interests, while other organizations were perceived to be looking only at their own organizational interests.

Below this paper first reports what the interviewees told about conflicts of interest in the projects. After that this paper looks at the three processes of social construction of interests: organizational instructions, observations in the project at hand, and previous experiences. Finally the solutions to the conflicts of interests the interviewees suggested are discussed.

Conflicts of Interests between Organizations

This study is based on the expectation that the interests as they are constructed by the individuals involved will have an important influence on patterns of collaborative behaviors. Interestingly, various respondents explicitly referred to the interaction process in terms of a game in which characteristics of a social dilemma could be recognized. Some individuals were aware of the fact that all organizations could benefit from an integrated approach to collaboration:

> *If you would look at the project from an integrated perspective […] then you would have a win-win situation, and not a looser and a winner* (HVAC systems supplier)
>
> *Now it is suboptimal in certain areas, you could move towards a global optimum. This is something of the shipyard, they are not used to the fact that there are parties that can think and work with them at their level. In the end it is an advantage for everybody, and then you create a win-win situation* (propulsion systems supplier)

The importance of clashes of interests was frequently expressed during the interviews:

> *Because we are separate companies each of us tries to further his own interests as much as possible* (propulsion systems supplier)
>
> *Everyone has their own agenda, and everybody knows that* (electrical engineering company)

Our interests sometimes collide; I think that is the basis of the troubles we have (internal piping division)

To a certain extent even *within* companies each division puts its own interest ahead, as evidenced by the piping division of the shipyard declaring "for us the bottom line is leading", and a propulsion systems supplier's sales agent who laments that he is dependent on an unwilling internal production department.

Some interviewees however observe behaviors pursuing the interests at the project level and believe in the long term benefits of this.

They have realized that it was wise to try to look at the interest of all organizations instead of their own interests. In addition, in the long term it would be most optimal for them to collaborate and not let the situation escalate (project management department of the shipyard)

Pursuing the project interests might be the much-needed improvement for the Dutch shipbuilding sector to survive. However, many find it difficult to work towards that situation. They all wait for other parties to take the first step, while sometimes also acknowledging that it is difficult for the other to move first, too.

*You should be able to focus all parties on the same goal and show them that it is about the total project. You do the right thing if you choose for a more expensive solution if that means that the other parties are better off, which in turn leads to a decrease in the total production costs of the ship. As long as you do not reach that point, everybody is sub-optimizing. They look at their own interests and search for the most efficient method for themselves, which does not serve the whole (*electrical engineering company*)*

All in all, the situation as sketched by the interviewees reflects many of the characteristics of a social dilemma.

Categories of Factors Influencing Interests

The three factors that were expected to influence the interests were also expressed by the individuals during the interviews. The first category that influences the perceived interests of the members of the multi-organizational project teams are the instructions they receive from their own organization. The lack of incentives on the level of the project as a whole makes it difficult for individuals to pursue this, because they would put themselves in a vulnerable position. A prevailing incentive mentioned by many respondents is the bottom line of their own organization. This perspective makes that the individuals are inclined to act according to the perceived organizational interests and not the project interests.

Previously there was unity; they [the shipyard and the subcontractors] had the feeling of being part of a team. […] Thirty years ago the shipyard sold a complete product; the different disciplines were then part of the shipyard. After that these disciplines were outsourced. It is difficult to create a feeling of unity with these subcontractors. Everybody has their own budget, which they are held responsible for. Every subcontractor only looks at their own budget (certification company)

No matter how upright a person is, if he is on the payroll of another company […] there is a potential confusion of interests (electrical engineering company)

This study found three underlying issues related to instructions in the interviews. The first is the dependency of the organization on the project. Some organizations only serve the shipbuilding market. These organizations tend to be highly dependent on the shipyard. Other organizations have diversified into several markets, and the projects studied were only a small part of their business. Suppliers that are highly dependent on shipbuilding stimulate boundary-spanning employees not to antagonize the shipyard. Less dependent suppliers steer their representatives more in the direction of the organizational interests. Hence employees of an organization that is highly dependent on the project might receive instructions to pursue the interests more in line with project interests than individuals of a less dependent organization.

The second issue refers to the profit expectations of the focal organization. Suppliers expecting to make a profit on a project perceive their interests differently than organizations that expect to make a loss. Profit-making organizations can afford to put the project interests and long-term gains ahead of their own short-term organizational interests.

If your financial leeway is reduced you will assume a less flexible position towards the shipyard (HVAC systems supplier)

There are parties where you notice when they are tight on their budget and they get the instruction to get as much out of the project as possible. You can see it if a party has calculated the hours and costs correctly [or not], you see it in their behavior (production department of the shipyard)

The question can be asked whether these first two factors are social constructions or rather "hard" objective facts. This paper purports that this is at least partially the case. It's not the "real" dependency and future profits of a company participating in a project that influence behavior, but what individuals believe on the basis of what they say to and hear from others. This of course does not negate that companies can also objectively be put under pressure and/or incur losses on a project, however, in an ongoing project much of this exists mainly as perceptions. Moreover, this paper surmises that these two issues mentioned above are subsidiary to the third and more

fundamental factor, the strategic role an organization defines for itself, and this is without doubt a social construction.

Since the interviews were restricted to the project level the present study has not been able to uncover the processes leading to a particular strategic stance at the different organizations involved, nor at the mechanisms linking that strategic identity to the instructions and incentives given to their representatives in the projects. But this seems to be a necessary step for future research in order to develop a more complete understanding of the factors hampering a way to overcome a social dilemma in the Dutch shipbuilding industry.

We focus on the product as such, not on the integrated solution (propulsion systems supplier)

Why, for instance has the propulsion systems supplier quoted above chosen to define itself as a component supplier, rather than as a provider of integrated solutions?

The second prevalent issue that forms the interests of the individuals in the organization is the observation of behavior of other participants in the project. From the interviews it appears that it is important how other individuals behave. The interviewees indicate that they mirror the behavior of other individuals.

If he does not participate then I am also not going to participate (electrical engineering company)

When there is somebody at the other side of the table who is resisting we can also do that (electrical engineering company)

When it gets busy, everybody gets a bit… you have to go for yourself at that moment and then it becomes … embittered is not really the right word (electrical engineering company)

In particular the behavior of the shipyard is important for the perceptions and behavior in the project. The shipyard is the coordinating party and therefore sets an example of the type of behavior expected. This is mentioned by several interviewees:

The attitude of the shipyard is very important. If the shipyard takes on the project with the intention of doing it together, and carries out that message in the project meetings effectively, only then, provided that the parties are open for the idea, it can go much easier (HVAC systems supplier)

Additionally, the contracts governing the project have an impact on the behavior and consequently on the interests in the project. Ambiguously defined contracts make that organizations might take decisions by themselves about what is or is not included in the contract. Issues that might fall between the contractual tasks of two collaborating organizations have to be solved by the shipyard. Organizations act as implied by their contracts. The contracts can give incentives to the organizations to act in the interests of the project, or not. The form of the contract is therefore

important for the pursuit of interests of the individuals in the project (but, as stated earlier, the contract is also a reflection of pre-existing social constructions of interests).

The last category of factors influencing the perceptions of interests of the partners is the personal experiences from previous projects. The relationships that individuals build with other individuals are essential for the collaboration in the project. Individuals are more inclined to 'give and take' with individuals from other organizations when they have positive past experiences.

> *I do believe that certain feelings from the past have played a role with that person. If something was wrong, it stayed wrong, it could not get better anymore* (engineering department of the shipyard)
>
> *In the past I was really flexible with that, but I got a smack in the face several times. Now as long as they do not give an assignment I do not do anything. It is a rigid disposition, but it is the only fair one. In the past we were flexible with that* (HVAC systems supplier)

But some respondents also mention good experiences, and that these form the basis of a good working relationship in the present project: "That is something you have built up over the years" (electro technical supplier).

Interviewees seemed to find it difficult to overcome negative feelings stemming from bad experiences. These were often associated with particular individuals from other organizations. For future research it might be interesting to examine the difference in impact of bad experiences with organizations or with specific individuals. It would also be interesting to analyze cases in which there is a contradiction between personal experiences and the instructions given by the own organization. For instance, what happens if a boundary spanner has good personal experiences with a counterpart, but is instructed to focus on the interests of the own organization only?

Comparing the three types of social construction as reflected in the interviews, it is striking us that many respondents spontaneously refer to organizational influences. When asked about interests related to the project, individuals tend to stay within their organizational role, and to identify with the goals of their organization. Expressions of individual interest were rare, and even if pressed interviewees were reluctant to differentiate between their own personal interests and those of their organization. Observations of behaviors of other parties in the project were also mentioned quite readily, but specific experiences from past projects surfaced less frequently. From these observations it can be concluded that the instructions individuals receive from their organizations were the predominant source of social construction of project-related interests in

this study. It has to be emphasized, however, that the strong identification of interviewees with these organizational interests implies that they actually did not need "instructions".

Towards Integrative Collaboration?

There are indications of a gradually deteriorating relationship between the shipyard and a number of (internal and external) suppliers, suggesting vicious cycles of decreasing cooperation:

> *We are not compensated for the additional work we do. As a result we stick to the contract. […] Next time we will not be eager any more to help solve a problem* (internal piping division)
>
> *In earlier order numbers we have tightened the screws on them and refused to pay for certain things. If you do that you can expect the same response, but if it happens we think it's not fair* (production department of the shipyard)

As noted when describing the fragmented interests of the organizations, many respondents stated that it would be desirable to overcome these conflicting interests, and move towards integrated collaboration. However, interviewees also identified a number of obstacles:

> *Shipyards are afraid that if they select suppliers early in the process, they will not pay market rates* (electrical engineering company)
>
> *We are willing to take the risk of system integration, but not in the role we are currently playing* (electrical engineering company)
>
> *In the construction phase the shipyard is willing to share knowledge, but less so or not at all in the pre-contractual phase. Then they stick to the commercial game* (HVAC systems supplier)

These quotes illustrate that many project participants recognize the social dilemma aspects of the shipbuilding process, but that they don't see a way out of it. As far as solutions are mentioned, two interrelated suggestions are made. First of all, the shipyard would need to select key suppliers at a much earlier stage, before the final contract with the client is finalized, and commit to these suppliers.

> *What is needed is that in a very early stage one says, we will participate, then we will also be open concerning costs and benefits, etc., and then we also want a commitment [from the shipyard]. Are we going to bring in the order together?* (HVAC systems supplier)

This approach implies a "structural solution" (Kollock, 1998), changing the incentive structure in such a way that the suppliers would be certain that investments made early in the process would not remain without compensation. However, this solution has the serious drawback that it would bring the shipyard in the vulnerable position "not to pay market rates".

Secondly, many interviewees suggest that the quality of the relationship needs to be improved, in terms of transparency, trust, and respect for each other's knowledge and expertise.

[If you want to create a win-win situation] you need to be transparent, you need to trust each other (HVAC systems supplier)

This second type of observations reverberates with what Kollock (1998) calls "motivational solutions". Looking at these statements it is striking that respondents are often ambivalent, for instance, a purchaser from the shipyard states "we need to move towards partnership, look beyond a single project", but in the next sentence he also says "commercially we can still improve, get the maximum out of it financially".

Finally it was observed that self-defined organizational identities were important. This was true even within the shipyards. At one of the production locations of a shipyard it was observed that "pre-contractually suppliers talk like co-makers, but once there is a contract they talk like subcontractors". The piping division of the shipyard, however, stated "if we want payment we are subcontractors, but if they do acquisition we are part of the Group". These quotes relate to who organizations or parts thereof want to be, the strategic role they want to play. This points in the direction of the third type of solutions to social dilemmas described by Kollock (1998): strategic solutions. If the principal organizations involved in a shipbuilding project define themselves as players involved in longer-term relations, this will be conducive to the realization of structural as well as motivational solutions to the social dilemma.

CONCLUSIONS

Social dilemmas are situations in which each individual party in a collaboration receives a higher payoff for the socially defecting choice than for the cooperative choice, no matter what the other parties do, and in which all individuals are better off if all cooperate than if all defect. The interviews show that these characteristics apply to multi-organizational projects in the shipbuilding industry.

Furthermore, this paper expected that perceptions of interest of self and others in the context of these shipbuilding projects would be influenced by three types of social construction: explicit and implicit instructions organizations give to their boundary spanners participating in the project team (Adams, 1976), observed behaviors within the project team (Fleishman, 1988), and previous experiences with the same organizations or individuals (Grabher, 2002). All three of these social influences could be identified, but in the interviews the instructions from the interviewees' organizations were featured particularly prominently. This points to the self-definition of these

organizations' identities and roles as a significant issue (Ahola, 2009). This "strategic" aspect of finding a solution to the shipbuilding social dilemma is all the more important as it seems to be indispensable for "structural" and "motivational" solutions to their part of the job (Kollock, 1998). The interviewees were also questioned regarding the possible solutions to the social dilemma situation, and their answers appeared to reflect a deep understanding of the intricacies of this predicament.

This study is characterized by several limitations, each of which suggests future research directions. Those that seem the most prominent are mentioned. First of all, this study has conducted a limited number of interviews that offer only a cross-sectional view of collaboration processes that are of an inherently dynamic nature. This is all the more important since several respondents pointed at the strong influence of an organization's financial expectations on their attitude towards the project. This means that an organization that early in the project had a collaborative stance can become more focused on its immediate self-interest if a loss on the project is expected. Thus a snapshot of perceived interests at only one point in time may fail to reveal the whole picture. This limitation calls for a more longitudinal approach, in which the parties involved in a multi-organizational project are followed over time.

Secondly, one could ask the question to what extent a sensitive issue like conflicts of interests can reliably be gauged in interviews. There is a risk that interviewees would rhetorically adhere to a collaborative stance, while in reality focusing on their own immediate interests. Sometimes such rhetorics were revealed when respondents made conflicting statements in a single interview. But it cannot be exclude that in some instances a declared collaborative approach may have been no more than verbal behavior. In this respect, too, a more longitudinal approach in future research would be recommended. Even if collaborative intentions can be feigned in a single interview, they would likely be revealed as false in a series of interviews over time with multiple stakeholders involved in the same shipbuilding project.

Overall, the interviews revealed a pattern of perceived interests that make a shift to "integrative collaboration" problematic. Nevertheless, many of our interviewees declared that such an approach would be preferable, and maybe even necessary for the Dutch shipbuilding industry to survive. The shift to integrative collaboration seems to be predicated on an early selection and involvement of key suppliers, who would then openly share knowledge and share in the risks of the project. This calls for a new definition of the strategic roles and even identities of both the shipyards and the suppliers. More insights into how companies (in the shipbuilding industry as well as elsewhere)

come to define and change their strategic identities are therefore needed, and this seems to be an additional promising direction for future research.

CHAPTER 3[1]

ACCOUNTS OF INTEREST: DIALOGUE AND COLLABORATION IN MULTI-ORGANIZATIONAL PROJECTS

ABSTRACT

In multi-organizational projects (MOPs) problems may arise due to divergent interests of the different parties. These differences of interest often have the characteristics of a social dilemma. In this paper it is argued that perceptions of interests of self and others in such situation are influenced by discursive social construction processes, and this paper focuses on the accounts participants in an MOP give of these interests. The aim is to theorize under which conditions dialogue leading to perceptions of interest commensurate with collaboration is most likely to arise in the context of an MOP. Temporal embeddedness, equality, scope of mandate and co-location of actors are important design parameters conducive for productive dialogue. The likelihood for productive dialogue to arise varies between different types of organizational roles in MOPs. Particular combinations of design parameters and organizational roles are argued to lead to the production of accounts compatible with collaboration, which in turn increases the likelihood of collaborative behaviors.

[1] This chapter is the result of joint work with Niels Noorderhaven.

INTRODUCTION

Many industries become more project oriented, in which different disciplines work together in a team while working on one project. A multi-organizational project, or "MOP", is a project in which multiple organizations work together on a single product. For each project, the project team may be different, composed of different organizations. Examples of MOPs can be found in the construction, aerospace, motion picture, defense, and shipbuilding industries (Gann & Salter, 2000; Scarbrough et al., 2004).

Essential in these multidisciplinary and multi-organizational teams is collaboration (Zeng & Chen, 2003). However, effective collaboration between organizations is not easy. One problem in these interorganizational relationships is keeping the goals and interests of the participants aligned (Hardy et al., 2005). This tension is particularly salient in project-based industries where multiple organizations come together in a temporary coalition to carry out a particular project (Kenis, Janowicz-panjaitan, & Cambré, 2009). Coordination problems among others may arise because the interests of the different parties are typically only partly aligned, frequently giving rise to situations with social dilemma-like characteristics (McCarter, Mahoney, & Northcraft, 2011).

A social dilemma is a game defined by two characteristics: (1) each player receives a higher payoff for a socially defecting choice than for a socially cooperative choice, no matter what the other players do; and (2) collectively all players are better off if all cooperate than if all defect (Dawes, 1980). Social dilemmas are situations in which the rationality of an individual leads to collective irrationality (Kollock, 1998). The construction industry, for instance, is notorious for the incidence of social dilemma-like problems. These problems arise because in a construction project of some complexity the tasks of the various participants can never be fully specified ex ante. During project execution this can create opportunities for holdup, claims for additional work, or other forms of opportunistic behavior (depending on the contractual medium). This behavior can assume quite extreme forms: "One device is to move any idle plant and labor onto a job where a delay is anticipated. Thus, when the delay occurs, the contractor is able to claim day rates for the idle resources" (Rooke et al., 2004: 659). As a result costs of failure and rework in construction projects are high (Love & Edwards, 2005; Zaghloul & Hartman, 2003), and everybody would be better off if the social dilemma could be resolved through some form of collaboration (Hardin, 1968; Weber et al., 2004).

A social dilemma involves multiple players and makes it therefore different from two–player games in three ways. Firstly, all harm of the non-cooperative choice (defection) is spread out between the players, instead of focused on the other player in a two-player game. Secondly, the

defecting behavior is more likely to be kept anonymous than in a two-player game (Jap, 2001). Thirdly, players cannot as easily shape the behavior of other players by punishing or rewarding players (Dawes, 1980; Kollock, 1998; Zeng & Chen, 2003). Due to the lack of punishment and reward and the difficulty of shaping other individual's behavior it is more difficult to achieve collaboration in a multi-player setting than in a two-player dilemma (Zeng & Chen, 2003). Two individuals might collaborate in an MOP. However, collaborative behavior towards the collective interests of all players is needed to solve the social dilemma. The interdependence of the players makes that all the players need to collaborate and work together towards their collective interests in order to overcome the social dilemma characteristics present in an MOP.

Several authors have applied a social dilemma approach to collaboration situations such as multi-party alliances (McCarter et al., 2011; Zeng & Chen, 2003). Characteristic of these collaboration situations is the dependence of the participating organizations on each other. The behavior of the participants affects the outcome of all participants. Project based settings differ from organizational relationships predominantly by its limited temporality. This temporality involves milestones and deadlines that shape the collaboration in projects (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). Additionally, the team in an MOP consists of representatives from different organizations, who can have diverging goals and interests (Hardy et al., 2005). The limited temporality in combination with the team consisting of representatives from different organizations makes these MOPs different from multi-party alliances, intra-organizational teams, cross-sector partnerships or meta-organizations (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2005).

Possible solutions to the social dilemma as identified by Kollock (1998) are structural, motivational and strategic solutions. Structural solutions aim at changing the pay-off structure, which would involve strict monitoring and sanctioning (Kollock, 1998). However, when there are many parties, such as in the situation of a MOP, it may be difficult to identify a defector (Zeng & Chen, 2003) and the ability and willingness to administer punishment may be questionable (Osterloh, Frost, & Frey, 2002). This paper focuses on the behavior of individuals in these social dilemmas and is not concerned with changing the payoff structure. Motivational and strategic solutions focus on making collaboration more attractive (Kollock, 1998). This gives reason to believe that such social dilemmas need to be solved through some form of collaboration (Hardin, 1968; Weber et al., 2004).

Rational choice theory assumes that the self-interest motivation of economic actors is given (Monroe, 2001; Pruitt & Kimmel, 1977; Weber et al., 2004). However, many authors have questioned this perspective on interests (Justice, 2006; Monroe, 1994; Whittle & Mueller, 2011).

They argue that the social context of individuals influences the perceptions of interests. In addition, if interests of self and others are products of discursive social construction processes (Whittle, Suhomlinova, & Mueller, 2010), the dilemma is at least partly of the participants' own making (cf. Gore & Cross, 2011). According to Clegg (1989: 181) "It cannot be maintained that interests are formulated outside the conditions of particular discursive practices and struggles". This paper will make a case that the construction of interests is closely linked to the type of collaboration in a project. Particular discursive processes are more likely to lead to socially constructed notions of the interests of self and others that are congruent with the common interests.

Economics literature assumes that in the context of a social dilemma different types of collaborative behavior can be distinguished. One way the literature characterizes collaborative behavior is the continuum of "perfunctory collaboration" to "consummate collaboration" (Williamson, 1975). Perfunctory collaboration refers to job performance according to minimally acceptable standards. Consummate collaboration, in contrast, refers to "an affirmative job attitude – to include the use of judgment, filling gaps, and taking initiative in an instrumental way" (Williamson, 1975: 69). Another similar continuum existing in the bargaining literature ranges from distributive to integrative collaboration. Distributive collaboration competes for the joint outcome, while integrative collaboration aims for jointly making the pie as large as possible (Larsson et al., 1998; Walton & McKersie, 1965). This paper uses the terms perfunctory and consummate collaboration because the focus on the job attitude fits the purpose of this paper.

In many instances moving towards more consummate collaboration seems to be imperative in order to solve the social dilemmas in MOPs. As this paper discusses in more detail further on, consummate collaboration consists of precisely those behaviors that are needed to prevent or solve social dilemmas (see Brown, Potoski, & Van Slyke, 2010). Therefore it is no surprise that there are many initiatives to improve collaboration in MOP-based industries. In the construction industry, for example, programs for improving collaboration have been initiated in many countries (Dewulf & Noorderhaven, 2011, describe four such programs). Research has shown it has become more pressing to answer questions of what it actually *is* that is tapped into with these interviews, and how what the respondents say can be assumed to relate to (changes in) the level of collaboration in the MOP have become increasingly more pressing. This paper aims to contribute to the formulation of an answer to these questions.

The starting point is formed by the accounts given by actors, where accounts are defined as "story-like" interpretations and explanations social actors give for the behavior of self and others in specific situations (see Orbuch, 1997, for a discussion of the use of the concept in sociological

research). Accounts of participants in MOPs can be of many different natures, and pertain, e.g., to technical expertise or to legitimate and illegitimate courses of action. Given the interest in social dilemmas this paper is specifically focusing on accounts of *interests*. A social dilemma can be seen as a mental representation of interrelated interests: "if I cooperate it will be in his interest to defect, but then it is also in my interest to defect, etc.". This paper employs a discursive perspective, i.e., this paper is interested in how the discourse reflected in these accounts is related to social dilemmas in MOPs and to possible ways to resolve these dilemmas. A "discourse" can be defined as "a connected set of statements, concepts, terms, and expressions which constitutes a way of talking and writing about a particular issue, thus framing the way people understand and act with respect to that issue" (Watson, 1994: 113). This paper will discuss the concept more deeply further on. Adoption of a discursive perspective is based on the assumption that what participants in MOPs say in an interview is more than just "cheap talk". If it is assumed that the realities individuals deal with in collaboration are socially constructed and maintained as well as changed through discourse (Hardy et al., 2005), changing a complex social system like an MOP will first and foremost take the form of changed conversations, resulting in changed accounts of reality by participants. These changed accounts are associated with the possibility of changed behavior, but this also depends on the change of accounts and behaviors by other participants in the MOP, as well as of actors in the wider social environment. The questions now are what causes accounts by some participants to change, and others to remain unchanged, and what configuration of changes in accounts is ultimately able to tip the balance, and move an MOP or even an entire organizational field towards a discourse of consummate collaboration.

The purpose of this paper is firstly to theorize under which conditions productive dialogue leading to consummate collaboration accounts is most likely to arise in the context of an MOP. This paper formulates propositions concerning the likelihood that particular accounts of interest will be produced by particular types of actors under particular conditions. Several authors have discussed factors that lead to productive dialogue (Habermas, 1979; Mansbridge, Hartz-Karp, Amengual, & Gastil, 2006). Productive dialogue is assumed to be achieved in a similar manner for different hierarchical levels. However, Corley (2004) argues that individuals from different hierarchical levels have different frames of reference. This leads to the conclusion that individuals from different hierarchical levels have different perceptions. Few authors have investigated the aspect of roles or hierarchical levels in relation to collaboration (Hardy et al., 2005). Therefore, this paper is interested in how the hierarchical level of individuals influences the conditions of productive dialogue to come to consummate collaboration. Additionally, the relationship between dialogue and

collaboration has been researched before (Hardy et al., 2005). What is still missing is how dialogue can contribute to consummate collaboration. This paper takes the next step by developing hypotheses about conditions leading to consummate collaboration.

Secondly, this paper will conjecture what type of constellation of consummate and perfunctory collaboration accounts will be most likely to lead over time to an overall change in discourse (towards more consummate types of collaboration), and what type of constellation is more likely to revert to perfunctory types of collaboration. The complex change processes that we are considering here cannot easily be captured in straightforward statement of cause-effect relations. Hence this paper formulates more tentative conclusions concerning the likelihood that particular configurations of accounts of interests will ultimately tip the balance, and shift the organizational field to a more consummate mode of collaboration.

The next section elaborates on the view of MOPs as socially constructed dilemmas, and discusses the process of social construction of interests through discourse. Next this paper turns to accounts of interests and explores discursive processes that may give rise to accounts of interests congruent with consummate collaboration in MOPs. This paper distinguishes between different types of conversation, and singles out dialogue as the type most likely to be generative of accounts of interest congruent with consummate collaboration. Subsequently, it is examined where in the context of an MOP, conditions for dialogue are more and less promising, and speculate on how discourse needs to change in order to make a shift to consummate collaboration possible at the level of an MOP or even the organizational field. This paper ends with a discussion and conclusions.

MULTI-ORGANIZATIONAL PROJECTS AS SOCIAL DILEMMAS

Generally the interests pursued by an individual can range on a continuum from self-interest to collective interest (Hardin, 1968; Monroe, 1994; Polzer, 2004; Wit & Kerr, 2002). Self-interested actions are defined as actions that aim at fulfilling a personal benefit, goal or desire (Cropanzano, Goldman, & Folger, 2005). Collective interests satisfy the goals of the collective of players, which means that the self-interests of the individual are aligned with the collective interests (Monroe, 1994). Self-interests and collective interests may be perceived differently by each actor involved (Medlin, 2006). In a social dilemma each player can choose from a continuum of behaviors ranging from a non-cooperative, defecting choice where the individual player pursues his self-interests, to a cooperative choice which maximizes the outcomes for all players collectively (Dawes, 1980).

Two types of conflict of interests can be observed in a social dilemma. The first conflict of interest pertains to a conflict between the individual and collective interests (Van Lange & Joireman,

2008). In the cooperative choice the actor chooses to pursue the collective interests, while in the non-cooperative choice only the individual interests are fulfilled. The second type of conflict is a temporal conflict between short-term and long term interests (Van Lange & Joireman, 2008). Although a non-cooperative choice may be beneficial for the individual in the short term, repetitive interaction makes the cooperative choice more beneficial in the longer run (Weber & Murnighan, 2008). Individual self-interested action undermines the cooperation, however, which causes the "cooperation problem" (Weber & Murnighan, 2008: 1340). The two conflicts of interests are linked: the temporal conflict only exists if cooperative behavior of others in both the current and future games is believed to be possible. Actors thus face several dilemmas when making the choice on a continuum of cooperative and non-cooperative types of behavior.

The tensions that exist in situations associated with social dilemmas can also be seen in multi-party collaboration forms such as MOPs (McCarter et al., 2011; Zeng & Chen, 2003). On the one hand parties need to collaborate if they want to achieve the best overall project result. On the other hand, parties may have a tendency to compete with each other or withhold efforts, because the benefits of the collaboration are shared among the parties, in contrast to the benefits directly associated with a socially defecting choice (Zeng & Chen, 2003). Conceptualizing MOPs as social dilemmas implies that it is assumed that MOPs are frequently characterized by constellations of interests such that the pursuit of individual goals leads to collectively suboptimal outcomes. In this context this paper prefers to use the concepts of perfunctory and consummate collaboration, rather than defecting and cooperating choices, as the issue is not so much that parties may choose not to cooperate at all, as that they may cooperate insufficiently to maximize the outcomes of the MOP to all participants. Defecting behavior is comparable to perfunctory collaboration. This type of behavior typically involves greater immediate individual gains, but smaller mutual payoffs for the collective. Defecting and perfunctory behavior both aim at the individual interests. These types of behavior can include collaboration with others, but with only the goal of furthering one's own interests. Aiming for minimally acceptable standards in a job often satisfies the individual's interests and may hinder the collective interests, and thus corresponds with the defection option. Examples of defective and perfunctory behavior in an MOP could be finding solutions only beneficial for their own organization and performing actions that further the accomplishment of one's own task, but hinder others in their work. Consummate behavior is analogous to a cooperative choice, which means a certain degree of self-renunciation, where a part of the individual payoff is sacrificed for a larger collective gain (Brown et al., 2010). Going beyond they

contract by using an affirmative job attitude would be beneficial for the collective interests and thus corresponds to the cooperative choice in the social dilemma.

This paper sees perfunctory and consummate collaboration as part of a continuum. Larsson et al (1998) argue that the traditional division between competition and collaboration neglects the perspective that these can exist together. Although in a project both competitive and collaborative behavior can exist at the same time, this paper assumes that both types of behavior cannot be portrayed simultaneously in an encounter with another individual. Consummate and perfunctory behavior can be seen as opposite types of behavior rather than mutually reinforcing concepts. The conflicts of interests as described above, individual versus collective interests and short term versus long term interests, indicate the opposite intentions between perfunctory and consummate types of behavior. Each end of the continuum aims for opposite goals. Therefore, perfunctory and consummate collaboration are opposing concepts and are constructed as a dualism.

So far, this paper has discussed social dilemmas in MOPs as structures of incentives that are taken as given by the participants. However, as indicated in the Introduction of this paper, it is argued that these situations are socially constructed through discourse. For instance, as noted by Pruitt and Kimmel (1977) the time frame within which the decision to cooperate is placed may strongly influence the collaborative choice. Such a frame is by definition not objectively given, but becomes focal as a result of psychological and social factors (Lindenberg & Foss, 2011). This paper wishes to make a more general argument here, viz., that what an individual considers her self-interest is the result of discursive social processes. Individuals participate in collective meanings through discourse, hence the mediation of language plays a pivotal role in the social construction process (Patriotta & Spedale, 2009). This is even the case when social influences are ostensibly not mediated by language, for instance, if someone observes the behaviors of others. Observed behaviors of self and others (including discursive behaviors) are integrated in a person's "self-narrative" (Bruner, 2004) in a sensemaking process that is of a fundamentally linguistic nature (Robichaud, Giroux, & Taylor, 2004).

Theories based on (rational) choice implicitly or explicitly assume that the individual is transparent to herself. I know who I am, and what I want is self-evident to me. However, the increasingly radical questioning of the possibility of complete self-understanding is one of the dominant motives of twentieth-century social philosophy (see, e.g., Gadamer, 1976; Ricoeur, 1991). What one's interests are, or one's ordering of preferences, is something one needs to discover or even invent. Going a step further, this paper assumes that our conception of what is in our interest is largely a social construction. This was also suggested by Bagozzi (1995: 274) when he tentatively

hypothesized that "some felt desires are in fact implicitly (i.e., mentally through vicarious or similar processes) or explicitly (i.e., through negotiation or other social processes) constructed jointly with others". In a social constructivist view actors construct their interests by looking at each other and by responding to what they see (Scott, 1995: 137). Wildavsky (1994) takes issue with the assumption of rational choice theory that interests are self-evident, and mainly associated with personal material gain. Outside of a social context interests have little meaning. This paper agrees with Wildavsky, but where this author links social construction of interests to "cultures" or "ways of life", this is deemed to be a too general approach. For the purpose of this study it is important to look more precisely how interests are socially constructed, not within a society or culture, but in a much more circumscribed group of individuals, like the managers and employees involved in an MOP. It is also important to highlight the fundamentally discursive nature of the process of social construction of interests. Language is not merely an instrument to communicate desires and preferences, it is the meaning expressed in language through which these desires and preferences come into being (Gadamer, 1976). Consequently, "interests cannot precede the discourse but are an effect of it" (Lawrence, Phillips, & Hardy, 1999: 491).

At this juncture it is appropriate to indicate the position this paper assumes in the debate on discursive approaches. First of all, this paper adheres to the general notion of discourse analysis that any view of language as just reflecting the "reality" is inadequate (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000a). Far from simply reflecting the reality (even such as it is subjectively perceived by the speaker), language can distort, hide, select or even invent realities (Lawrence et al., 1999). The last point is fundamental to discursive analysis: language constructs reality, rather than simply reflecting it (Hardy et al., 2005), and discourses "do not just describe things; they *do* things" (Potter & Wetherell, 1987: 6). Two quite different types of discourse analysis share this foundation of the constitutive nature of language. On the one hand there are approaches that are strongly focused on texts. Elements of discourse are seen to influence other elements of discourse, but not necessarily any reality outside of the text. The second type of approach studies social reality as discursively constructed and maintained (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000b). Given the interest in processes of collaboration within MOPs it is clear that a purely textual analysis cannot be satisfactory. Imagine, for instance, that it would prove to be possible that an organizational field would shift completely to a discourse of consummate collaboration, while practices of collaboration (e.g., in the sense of the holdup tactics in construction projects sketched in the Introduction) would continue to display the features of perfunctory collaboration, or worse. If that were the case "talk" would be completely isolated from "action". Hence, the analysis is predicated on the assumption that "talk is not cheap"

(Ford & Ford, 1995), and the link between accounts and action is crucial. Actors who are opaque to themselves and live in an ambiguous social world need stories that tell them what they are and what is the appropriate thing to do in a particular situation (Beadle & Moore, 2006). This "logic of appropriateness" (March & Olsen, 2004) is very different than the logic of consequence supposedly followed by a fully rational actor who has absolute certainty about his preferences (Weber et al., 2004). Hence, making sense of these stories is necessary to come to meaningful action.

Before moving to a discussion of the type of discourse that might lead to these new accounts of the interests of self and others, further explication on the position regarding the ontological status of discursive constructions is needed. Many industries produce very tangible material products like buildings, ships, or technical installations. Are these material objects more "real", or "real" in another way, than the discursive social constructions this study focuses on? Watzlawick (1976, 1990) distinguishes between "first-order" and "second-order" realties. The term first-order reality refers to "the physically demonstrable and publicly discernible characteristics, qualities, or attributes of a thing, event, or situation" (Ford & Ford, 2009: 228). The second order reality is created through discursive social construction, by giving meaning to the first-order reality. For instance, the fact that contractor A has located particular equipment and employees on a particular construction site and at a particular date is part of first-order reality. Whether this constitutes a legitimate ground for claims or opportunistic behavior is part of the second-order reality. A change of discourse implies a change of the second-order reality and thus of interpretations of the first order reality. And as people act on the basis of their interpretations (Watzlawick, 1990), this will also impact on the first-order reality.

If changing a discourse were an easy process, social reality would become intolerably fickle. But in fact socially constructed second-order reality is quite resilient. Under conditions of business-as-usual, actors tend to make no distinction between first-order and second-order realities, i.e., events and their interpretations of these. Only when these two realities are pulled apart through reflective discourse the possibility of attaching a different meaning to a given first-order reality becomes clear (cf. Senge, 1990). What makes this so hard, is that over time and across a multitude of conversations and sensemaking episodes a given interpretation of issues, interests and identities becomes increasingly "laminated" (Boden, 1994: 76) or "sedimented", and hence extremely hard to dislodge (Lawrence et al., 1999: 498). Such a "connected set of statements, concepts, terms, and expressions which constitutes a way of talking and writing about a particular issue, thus framing the way people understand and act with respect to that issue" (Watson, 1994: 113), is in discourse analysis sometimes indicated as the "Discourse" (with capital "D"), while "discourse" stands for the

separate contributions to this ongoing conversation (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000b; Fairhurst & Putnam, 2004). In the next section this paper will argue that one particular type of conversation, dialogue, has characteristics that privilege it for changing a Discourse.

CONVERSATIONS AND ACCOUNTS OF INTEREST

This paper is interested in accounts of interests of self and others of participants of MOPs because it takes the narratives individuals produce about their collaboration with business partners to be a strong factor influencing their behavior. Accounts pertaining to (self-) interests are bound to take a central position in these narratives, because of the dominance of the assumption of self-interest, at least in Western societies. This causes individuals to overstate the extent to which their own behavior is guided by self-interest, and to assume self-interest from others when no clear counter-information is available (Miller, 1999; Ratner & Miller, 2001; Vuolevi & Van Lange, 2010). This paper does not purport that shifting from perfunctory to more consummate collaboration in an MOP requires a renunciation of self-interest (in self and others). Instead, what is needed is a change in the contents of what are believed to be rational and legitimate self-interests in the context of collaborating in an MOP.

To make this more concrete, this paper takes a closer look at what is implied with "consummate collaboration" (or "cooperation"). This concept was introduced by Blau and Scott (1962), and taken up by Williamson (1975) and many other scholars in organizational economics. Brown, Potoski & Van Slyke (2010) applied the concept to interorganizational collaboration in the production of complex products, and equated perfunctory collaboration with a defective move in a game and consummate collaboration with a cooperative choice. Consummate collaboration includes behaviors like exerting efforts beyond what can be contractually enforced, taking initiatives when opportunities for mutual gains arise, and assuming responsibility when matters fall between the cracks of formal arrangements (see Blau & Scott, 1962; Clague, 1993). More generally, consummate collaboration in the context of an MOP would seem to require a shared social construction of what good collaboration is (Keller & Loewenstein, 2011). This could for instance include an emphasis on longer-term, rather than short-term interests, which steers participants away from immediate material self-interest (Hunt, Kim, Borgida, & Chaiken, 2010). In accounts of interests congruent with consummate collaboration, then, interests of self and others could be associated with the longer term outcomes, with effort exertion beyond the contractually enforceable, with initiative taking and with assuming responsibility when necessary.

Whereas all conversations may be expected to impact on accounts rendered by the participants, not all types of conversations are equally likely to contribute to accounts of interests congruent with consummate collaboration. Franco (2006) distinguishes five types of conversation: negotiation, debate, persuasion, deliberation and dialogue. Negotiation conversations may vary in the extent to which they are of a more competitive or "integrative" nature (Clopton, 1984). According to Gergen, McNamee and Barrett (2002: 81) parties in negotiations "are encouraged to identify their basic interests, what they want from the negotiation and how important it is for them". This implies that interests are assumed to be taken as given. Note also that exploring assumptions underlying basic interests is not part of the negotiation conversation. In debate (or discussion) the issue is who wins, and proves the other side wrong. This form of conversation leads to separate, rather than shared points of view (Isaacs, 2002; Roberts, 2002). The third conversation type, persuasion, is not characterized by a situation in which the parties are pitted against each other, like in the first two. In persuasion, "each participant tries to legitimize their particular proposition or point of view through evidence or persuasive argument. A persuaded party will thus change his or her initial positions and commit to that of the persuader party" (Franco, 2006: 814). Hence, persuasion does imply that one of the parties has to give in, if the persuasion is to succeed. Due to the focus on own interests with little exploration of shared interests these first three forms of conversation do not seem to be very conducive to a change of discourse towards consummate collaboration.

This leads to the final two conversation types, deliberation and dialogue. These types have some similarities, and in practice it will not always be easy to distinguish between them. Deliberation is often seen as more closely linked to action (Franco, 2006; Roberts, 2002). Dialogue in contrast is not (necessarily) linked to a concrete decision or solving a concrete problem (Burkhalter, Gastil, & Kelshaw, 2002). It "is not about judging, weighing, or making decisions, but about understanding and learning. Dialogue dispels stereotypes, builds trust, and enables people to open to perspectives that are very different from their own" (Heierbacher, 2007: 103). Hence, although the concepts are closely related (and sometimes used interchangeably) this paper will reserve the term deliberation for conversations linked to the need to make a decision concerning an action, while dialogue is a type of conversation aimed at jointly creating meaning and shared understanding between participants (Franco, 2006). In order to come to consummate collaboration exploration and sharing of common interests are necessary. Therefore, the conjecture of this paper is that of all types of conversation, dialogue is most likely to conduct parties to consummate collaboration. For this reason this paper will look more closely at the characteristics of and conditions for dialogue.

A dialogue can be described as "a form of consciously constructed conversation in which participants engage in a sustained and collaborative investigation into the underlying assumptions and certainties that underlie their everyday experiences and relationships with the intent of creating more effective interactions" (Ford, 1999: 490). The willingness to dig into one's taken-for-granted truths and often hidden (to oneself as well as others) assumptions is a crucial aspect of dialogue. Emulating the Socratic dialogue, interlocutors can access meanings covered by sedimented layers of tacit assumptions (Linder, 2002). Thus, dialogue is a process that enables reflection upon, and potentially alters self-made limits (Isaacs, 2002). As Mansbridge (2006) argues, it is only by discussing experiences with others that individuals can develop a language to understand their interests. The result is self-distanciation (Tsoukas, 2009): taken-for-granted truths can be looked at from the perspective of the other. This, of course, implies not only a willingness to distance oneself from one's own basic assumptions, but also to try to understand those of the other. Taking the response of the other seriously makes one understand one's own utterance in a different light, and hence produces cognitive change. This can of course be trivial (when taken-for-granted ideas are or seem confirmed), but can also be profound. First-order and second-order realities, which previously occurred as one seamless reality, can now be distinguished, providing the opportunity to collectively generate a new second-order reality (Ford, 1999).

Dialogue may seem "motherhood and apple pie", but the reality is that in everyday life, and specifically in business life, it is not easy to have a genuine, "productive" (Tsoukas, 2009) dialogue. The idea of having a dialogue that uproots fundamental assumptions might evoke resistance, because of its potentially destabilizing effect (Cayer, 1997). It also is "a disturbance of everyday reasoning habits" (Ryfe, 2005: 56). Consequently, for an entire business conversation to be a dialogue may be rare, and this is more often realized only partially or for a limited duration. In an interorganizational context, like that of an MOP, there may be additional barriers. Clopton (1984) argues that individuals acting as representatives of their organization will be less inclined to engage in integrative bargaining than individuals acting on their own behalf. Factors producing this effect are that the representative is held accountable for the outcome of the negotiation, and the representative's loyalty and commitment to his organization (Clopton, 1984). It seems plausible that these observations with regard to bargaining style can be generalized to the propensity to engage in dialogue, as generally "people fear being judged inadequate by their 'tribe'" (Isaacs, 2002: 205).

CONDITIONS FOR DIALOGUE WITHIN A MULTI-ORGANIZATIONAL PROJECT SETTING

The interest in conversations is based on the notion that accounts are produced through conversations – even if these are conversations with oneself.[2] In principle, as conversations are the primordial mechanisms producing accounts, one should be studying these, but there are two reasons to focus on accounts instead. First of all, every individual actor is involved in many different conversations with many different others, and possibly with contradicting contents. What counts in the end is how all of these together are collated into an account that gives meaning to the actor. Secondly, there is a methodological reason: conversations are fleeting and most often remain hidden from the researcher, accounts can be evoked and documented. Compared with more structured types of data accounts are more likely to yield also non-conscious meanings and motives (Orbuch, 1997). This paper should not be naïve about the veracity of what people say in interviews. As Alvesson (2003) notes, interview responses may be an effort to construct a valued, coherent self-image, rather than an unbiased reflection of the interviewees' mind. However, this does not mean interview responses are not important. The self-constructions an actor wishes to convey in an interview reveal much of what he considers to be a meaningful rendering of the situation and what are appropriate thoughts and actions for an actor with her identity.

Mansbridge, Hartz-Karp, Amengual and Gastil (2006), summarizing the normative literature, state that an ideal situation for a productive dialogue is characterized by consensus, rationality, freedom and equality. The rationality presumption is foundational to the conditions of the ideal speech situation as discussed by Habermas. According to Habermas dialogue is characterized by a "gentle but obstinate" claim to reason (Habermas, 1979: 3). Rationality (and rejection of emotional discourse) is also characteristic of business interactions (Gillette, 1984; Gratton & Ghoshal, 2003). This paper assumes rationality to be present, and focuses on the other factors mentioned by Mansbridge et al. (2006), and reflect upon these in the context of social construction of interests in an MOP. A presumption of rationality (and rejection of emotional discourse) is characteristic of business interactions (Gillette, 1984; Gratton & Ghoshal, 2003). Regarding the other factors mentioned by Mansbridge et al. (2006), consensus, freedom and equality are important in order to establish a productive dialogue.

The first condition that is mentioned by Mansbridge et al. (2006) is consensus. For consensus to be likely to arise the instrumental calculative engagement typical for business relations should make way for a more "relational engagement", in which the interlocutants take responsibility for

[2] Watson (1995) gives a good example of a manager having a conversation with himself, leading to an account fitting a particular course of action.

both the joint task in which they are involved and for their relationship (Tsoukas, 2009). Taking responsibility for the relationship implies making investments to maintain the relationship over time and into the future. Hence the "temporal embeddedness" (Rooks, Raub, Selten, & Tazelaar, 2000) is increased. An MOP is by definition of limited duration, but may be embedded to a stronger or a lesser degree in a series of projects between the same participants. The same companies and/or individuals representing them may have worked together before, and there may be an expectation to work together again in the future (Jones & Lichtenstein, 2008). Experimental as well as field research indicates that the effects of the "shadow of the past" (the duration, frequency, volume and success of previous transactions between the same parties) and the "shadow of the future" (the expectation of future transactions) are mutually reinforcing (Batenburg, Raub, & Snijders, 2003; Rooks et al., 2000). It is expected that to the extent that there is more temporal embeddedness, there will also be more relational engagement and hence a stronger motivation to engage in productive dialogue. The first condition for productive dialogue that this paper considers is therefore temporal embeddedness.

Two other conditions that were mentioned by Mansbridge et al. (2006) were freedom and equality. These conditions relate to the equality and scope of mandate that are considered in this paper. The freedom and equality conditions may be expected to be problematic in the context of an MOP. The freedom of many actors may be restricted in so far as they are acting as boundary spanners representing their organizations (Levina & Vaast, 2005). In these cases the scope of their mandate will be important. If boundary spanners are given a narrow scope, the possibility to come to a genuine dialogue with counterparts from other organizations in the MOP is undermined, and the possibility of coming to consummate collaboration becomes more remote. Equality, finally, may ostensibly exist between representatives of different companies engaged in an MOP, but in reality there often is a clear pecking order between companies, as for instance is the case between main contractor and subcontractors in a construction project (Stinchcombe, 1985). Nevertheless, productive dialogue could come about if all participants in a conversation at least temporarily treat each other as equals (Roberts, 2002). Equal parties feel more free to disagree (Kabanoff, 1991), increasing the possibilities of coming to productive dialogue. Treating each other as equals is facilitated when there is a dialogue between actors from the same organizational hierarchical level, with assumingly mostly the same responsibilities. Productive dialogue may be particularly difficult if several representatives of a single organization, who are in a hierarchical relationship, are engaged in a dialogue. Equality and scope of mandate are the second and third condition that influences productive dialogue and are used in this paper.

In addition, there seems to be an implicit assumption in much of the dialogue literature that the conversation takes place face-to-face. In MOPs this is the case for some conversations, but not for others. Some of the employees and managers involved in MOPs like construction projects or shipbuilding projects work side-by-side with colleagues from other organizations on the production site, while others remain at the premises of their own company. Physical proximity is an important factor influencing collaborative processes (Kraut, Fussell, Brennan, & Siegel, 2002) and should be taken into account. Specifically, face-to-face conversations are superior in terms of the possibility "to provide immediate feedback, to convey multiple cues, to support personalization, and to accommodate linguistic variety" (Yates & Orlikowski, 1992: 308-309). Co-location makes the last condition for productive dialogue that is incorporated in this paper.

When looking at discourse within and around MOPs this paper feels it is helpful to distinguish between conversations between different kinds of roles (see, e.g., Paasivaara & Lassenius, 2003, for a comparable approach to interorganizational software development projects). Roles can be defined as "standardized patterns of behavior required of all persons playing a part in a given functional relationship" (Katz & Kahn, 1978: 43). Interorganizational relations within MOPs come into effect through individual boundary spanners (Nooteboom, Berger, & Noorderhaven, 1997). The roles these individuals play vary with their position in the organization (Ring & Van de Ven, 1994). In addition, individuals that have different roles have a different frame of reference, which makes them have a different perception (Corley, 2004). Corley (2004) distinguished between three types of hierarchical levels: top management, middle management and operational employees. In line with the distinction made by Corley (2004) this paper uses three similar types of organizational roles. The three organizational roles are: higher manager, project managers, and project executors. The role of higher managers in the context of an MOP is to negotiate the overall commercial agreement, as well as to design the structures and systems for the operation of the MOP (Janowicz-Panjaitan & Noorderhaven, 2009). With higher managers this paper refers to managers at buying firms and commercial managers at selling firms interacting in the context of the commercial transactions that lie at the basis of an MOP. These managers bear profit responsibility, and by virtue of their function they look at the relationship with other firms in the MOP from a profit-and-loss frame. Project managers are lower-level boundary-spanning personnel that work within the conditions set by the higher managers (Prahalad & Bettis, 1986; Wilemon & Cicero, 1970). These people are those individuals who "provide the linking mechanism across organizational boundaries" (Inkpen & Currall, 1997). They can be team leaders from different companies, for instance engaging in the joint development of a new car (Hamel, 1991). In the context of MOPs many lower-level

operational tasks are also carried out by employees from different organizations, which this paper calls project executors. In the construction industry, for example, it is the rule rather than the exception to see employees from a number of (sub) contractors working jointly on a project.

Turning now to the analysis of conversations in and around MOPs, this paper is interested in the conditions that are more or less conducive to productive dialogue, and in particular those conditions that can be influenced by the organizations. These conditions are called the *design choices* in the management of the MOP. This paper looks at lateral interorganizational conversations at three different levels. The expectations are summarized in Table 3.1. The cells shaded grey indicate "design choices" in the management of an MOP that this paper believes influence the likelihood of a productive dialogue occurring between actors with particular roles.

TABLE 3.1
Conditions for Dialogue in Lateral Conversations

	Higher Management	**Project Management**	**Project Execution**
Temporal embeddedness	Low or high	Intermediate	Low
Equality	Yes/no	Yes/no	Yes
Scope of mandate	Large	Narrow or large	Narrow or large
Co-location	No	No	Yes/no

(Shaded cells indicate MOP design choices)

Starting with the factors influencing lateral interorganizational conversations first the temporal embeddedness between higher managers is considered. This condition is based on the consensus condition for productive dialogue as indicated by Mansbridge et al. (2006). Temporal embeddedness, i.e., the extent to which the higher managers are inclined to take responsibility for maintaining their relationship with firms and individuals they have worked with in the past and/or expect to work with in the future (Batenburg et al., 2003; Rooks et al., 2000), is an important design choice at this level. Temporal embeddedness may be partly dictated by industry characteristics, but it can also be willfully influenced by firms. To the extent that the temporal embeddedness is higher, this paper believes the conditions to be more favorable for productive dialogue. This is something higher managers can influence. Companies can make it their policy to repeat doing business with

preferred partners, at least as long as experiences are positive. Alternatively, they can also opt to "play out" potential partners against each other, in order to improve their bargaining position.

A second characteristic that is partly conditioned by contingencies like the relative sizes of the companies, and partly by the roles of client and supplier, is the degree of equality in the conversations. Also this condition is based on a condition for productive dialogue as mentioned by Mansbridge et al. (2006). Even legally independent contractors do not interact on a footing of strict equality if one has the role of the client and the other that of potential provider. But the parties can create an atmosphere in which they communicate on the basis of equality (Hardy et al., 2005). To the extent that they succeed in doing so, they improve the conditions for a dialogue. Higher managers of different firms are more likely to interact as equals and on a collegial basis if they have regular informal face-to-face contact. In this sense, the conditions of equality and proximity are linked, and reinforce each other.

The scope of mandate condition in line with the freedom condition as discussed by Mansbridge et al. (2006) is another aspect for higher managers. The scope of the mandate of higher managers can (almost by definition) be taken to be large, as these managers are responsible for the overall strategic direction of the corporation (Prahalad & Bettis, 1986). Moreover, higher managers are typically not co-located with their counterparts at other firms. These two characteristics that this paper assumes to be given may work in opposite directions if it comes to the generation of a dialogue conducive to consummate collaboration. A broad mandate offers higher managers the opportunity to focus on long-term benefits in a given collaboration, also if this implies renouncing short-term gains, or even incurring short-term losses. The fact that higher managers of different organizations involved in an MOP tend to have relatively little face-to-face contact, in contrast, is not conducive to the genesis of consummate collaboration dialogues. When discussing project executors, this paper will discuss the benefits of face-to-face interactions for dialogue more in detail. Although it is unthinkable that the higher managers of the firms involved in a particular MOP will actually be co-located during (a substantial part of) the duration of the project, they are free to create more opportunities for face-to-face interactions. This paper believes that such opportunities, in particular when combined with temporal embeddedness and an atmosphere of equality, will positively influence the opportunity for higher managers to engage in a dialogue that will help them construct accounts of consummate collaboration.

Higher managers therefore are expected to have the best chance to engage in productive dialogue with each other when there is more temporal embeddedness and if they choose to interact as much as possible on the basis of equality, even if they are client and contractor.

Hence:

P1a Productive interorganizational dialogue is more likely to arise between higher managers of companies in an MOP who are strongly temporally embedded
P1b Productive interorganizational dialogue is more likely to arise between higher managers of companies in an MOP who interact on the basis of equality

The second type of conversations in this paper is the lateral interorganizational conversation between project managers. It is expected that the temporal embeddedness of the relationships between project managers is often lower than that of relationships between higher managers. Managers at higher organizational levels usually have longer time horizons than lower organizational members (Voss & Blackmon, 1998). Therefore, project managers' tendency to maintain long term relationships is lower than that of higher managers. However, as project managers work as boundary spanners between different organizations, external relationships might be important to project managers and the temporal embeddedness might still be of intermediate importance to them. Like higher managers, project managers will typically not be co-located with their counterparts from other organizations participating in the MOP, so opportunities for face-to-face interaction are limited (although, just like in the case of higher managers, these opportunities can deliberately be created). The two main design choices regarding for this category of conversations are the scope of the mandate of the participants and the extent to which they converse on a basis of equality. Both issues, this paper contends, are strongly linked to the strategies of the organizations in an MOP. This leads to the following propositions:

P2a Productive interorganizational dialogue is more likely to arise between project managers of companies in an MOP who interact on the basis of equality
P2b Productive interorganizational dialogue is more likely to arise between project managers of companies in an MOP who have a broader mandate

The third type of conversations this paper focuses on are those between the employees who are involved in the production of the product or service that forms the *raison d'être* of the MOP. This paper calls these the project executors. This paper reckons project executors to have a low level of temporal embeddedness, compared with higher managers and project managers. Project executors may be temporally embedded in the sense of having worked together earlier, on the organizational

or the interpersonal level, which may increase their ability to work together and the level of trust (Laan, Voordijk, Noorderhaven, & Dewulf, 2012). But this category of employees may be expected to concentrate on the job at hand, as the prospect of future common projects is less of their concern, because this is not their responsibility. This paper also assumes that the project executors working on a project will typically do so on a basis of equality. This is for instance the case in construction projects. In his ethnographic study Applebaum (1981) notes that construction workers do not work under close supervision, compared to for instance factory workers.

The two design choices that in this paper's view will crucially determine the conditions for interorganizational dialogue between project executors are the scope of their mandates and the question whether they are co-located or not. If the project executors and their staff are operating within a very detailed and rigid project plan there will be little time and use for dialogue. The work of project executors is predetermined, and there is little scope for collaborative behavior, even if they would be inclined. However, firms participating in an MOP can also opt to give their project executors broader mandates, allowing them more degrees of freedom in organizing the work with their colleagues from other firms in a flexible way. This paper contends that such a broader mandate creates a more fertile ground for dialogue. Regarding co-location, research shows that close collaboration is easier under the condition of proximity, but most of the studies look at collaboration between different departments within a single firm (see, e.g., Kahn & McDonough III, 1997). But there is also some evidence that co-location is beneficial in MOPs. Laan, Noorderhaven, Voordijk and Dewulf (2011) describe how in a project alliance in railway construction co-location of design team members from different firms had beneficial effects, and that even being located at a different floor of the same site office created psychological distance. Therefore, this paper concludes that there will be better chances for a dialogue of consummate collaboration to arise when more managers and employees work side-by-side at a single location. Hence:

P3a Productive interorganizational dialogue is more likely to arise between project executors in an MOP who have a broader mandate

P3b Productive interorganizational dialogue is more likely to arise between project executors in an MOP who work at the same location

This paper is not interested in dialogue for its own sake because, as argued above, this paper assumes that productive dialogue will lead to accounts commensurate with consummate collaboration. These kinds of accounts in turn will influence the tendency to engage in

consummately collaborative behaviors. First of all, for productive dialogue to lead to changed behavior in the MOP it needs to lead to changed accounts at the level of the individual actor. Accounts are generally closely linked to conversations (Firth, 1995), and in particular when it comes to collaboration and interests one needs to observe and talk with others to find out what is "normal", "rational", or "appropriate".

Secondly, actors need to act upon the new accounts produced in productive dialogue. Jacobs and Heracleous (2005) illustrate how dialogue can alter participants' mental models, which in turn enables new behaviors. Communication is "performative", i.e., it creates a new reality, within which the interlocutors now start interacting (Barrett, Thomas, & Hocevar, 1995; Ford & Ford, 1995). In that sense productive dialogue not only *can* change, but inevitably *does* change reality. Even if behaviors remain ostensibly unchanged, the meanings attached to it will have shifted. Figure 3.1 illustrates the hypotheses as developed in this paper.

P4a Organizational actors in an MOP who are involved in productive interorganizational dialogue are more likely to produce accounts commensurate with consummate collaboration
P4b Organizational actors in an MOP who produce accounts commensurate with consummate collaboration are more likely to engage in consummately collaborative behaviors

FROM PRODUCTIVE DIALOGUE TO CONSUMMATE COLLABORATION

The most difficult questions still remain. How can changes in discourse at the level of pairs of actors across organizational boundaries lead to behavioral change at the level of the MOP? This is an issue this paper can only speculate about.

The type of change that may come about through productive dialogue is unlike top-down orchestrated change processes. Change agency in contrast is distributed over different role incumbents in and around the MOP. Buchanan, Addicott, Fitzgerald, Ferlie & Baeza (2007) describe such a change process with "nobody in charge" in a healthcare organization. Although interests and roles were manifold and complex in their case, it still is arguably simpler than changing collaboration within an MOP with social dilemma-like characteristics.

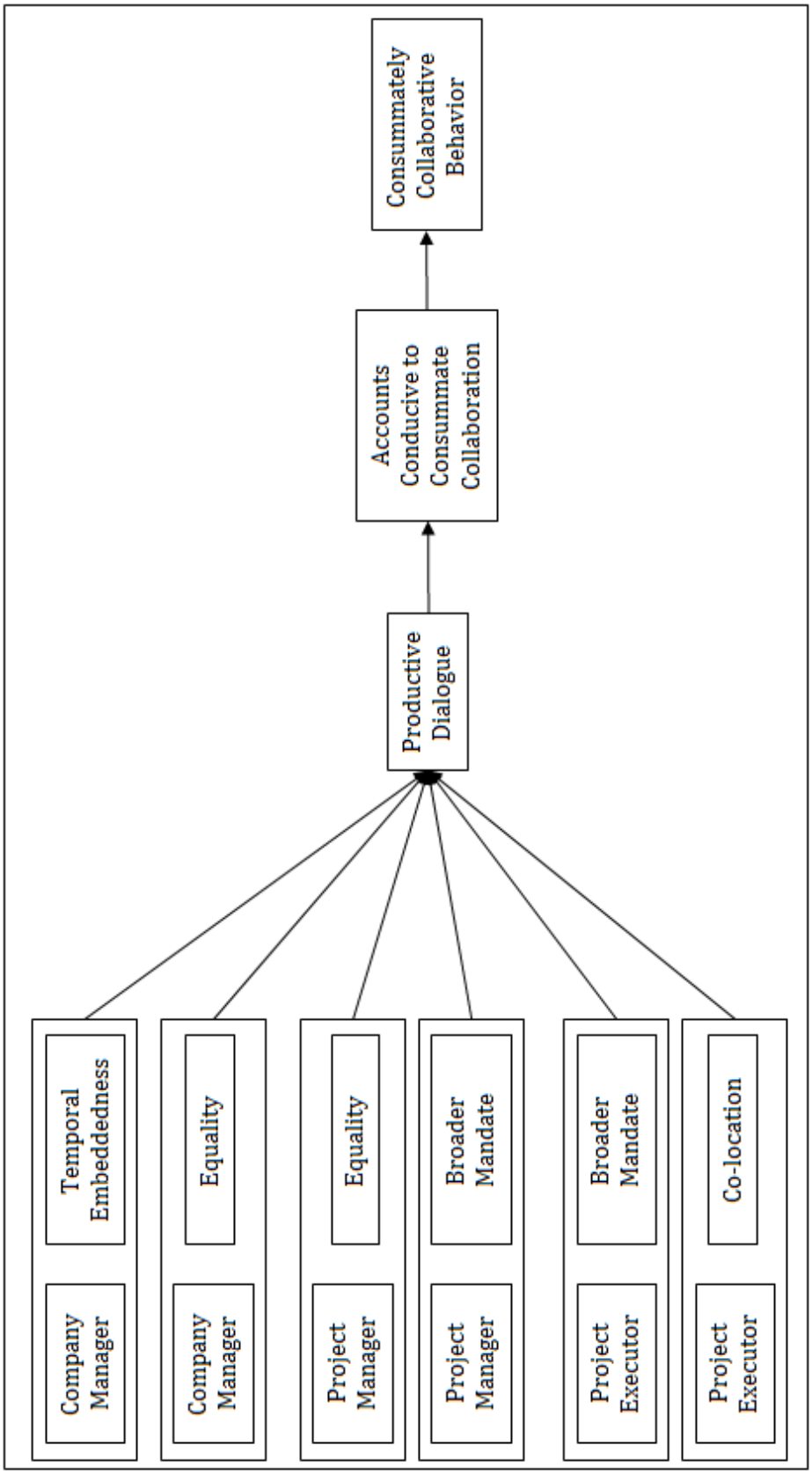


FIGURE 3.1
Hypotheses

All the same, drawing some lessons from the case described by Buchanan et al. (2007) is that distributed change agency can be effective under a set of conditions. Among those emphasized by Buchanan et al. (2007) are the presence of change champions, a culture of participation and innovation granting a lot of leeway to those change agents, and a pre-existing network of trustful relationship among the change agents. The latter two conditions point, again, at the importance of the factors of temporal embeddedness and equality, discussed above.

"Tipping point" dynamics, discussed by Gladwell (2000), may help understand how local pockets of consummate collaboration discourse may lead to larger-scale change. Gladwell singles out three conditions that seem to be particularly important for change processes to reach and advance through the tipping point. First of all, the change needs to be "contagious" as Shapiro (2010) argues. Secondly the tipping point is reached easier when little causes bring big effects. This may be a difficult condition to meet. The benefits of consummate collaboration are uncertain, and not immediately realized. Finally, spontaneous change processes are most likely to succeed if change is sudden and dramatic, rather than gradual. Again, this is not likely to be the case in a shift towards more consummate collaboration, and hence the overall assessment is that this change process may easily stall.

It seems likely that a change of discourse across all three levels distinguished above is needed for change at the MOP level to come about. Otherwise a relapse to the previously dominant discourse of perfunctory collaboration is likely. The situation of the organizational field of the construction industry appears to illustrate this. At the level of on-site operational actors consummate collaboration can often be found, but the attitudes of both project managers and higher managers is often more ambivalent (Janowicz-Panjaitan & Noorderhaven, 2009; Kadefors, 2004). In this situation operational actors are between a rock and a hard place: in their daily work they tend towards consummate collaboration, however their off-site colleagues and bosses keep them from "going native" in the project, and they may be confronted with directions to limit collaboration in particular if the financial situation of the project is precarious for their organization.

Above this paper indicated the attitude of project managers and higher managers in the construction industry to be "ambivalent". Ambivalence of accounts is more probable with higher managers than with the other categories: higher managers are involved in discourses concerning the long-term viability of the organization *and* need to report on short-term profitability. They relate to higher managers of other firms in the MOP and the organizational field as exchange partners *and* as colleagues. In addition, they converse with managers and employees in their own organization who are predominantly driven by financial results (and need to be addressed in that

way) *and* managers and employees who are predominantly driven by (technical) task achievements. This points also at an aspect not yet mentioned in our discussion: discourse can also be self-disbelieved, i.e., hypocritical. Brunsson (1993) sees hypocrisy as a solution when talk and action *cannot* be aligned, but a less benign interpretation is that hypocrisy is used when managers do not *want* to act in accordance to what they say. In a social dilemma situation this may happen because an actor by making self-disbelieved statements about cooperation hopes to make the other actors select this action, while opting for defection himself. Brunsson (1993) notes that hypocrisy is more viable as a strategy to the extent that a manager is more remote from action, which also makes it more likely that higher managers engage in hypocrisy than project executors.

CONCLUSIONS

Before starting with the conclusion, it must be explicitly conceded that intra-MOP dialogues are but one of the sources of influence on accounts and behaviors of organizational actors. Managers and employees at all levels are also engaged in conversations with others outside the focal MOP, and even outside the organizational field in which the MOP is embedded. Hence, any conclusion this paper can draw has to be at the level of enhanced or diminished chances of productive dialogue to arise. Under this proviso this paper has identified temporal embeddedness, equality, scope of the mandate and co-location of actors as important factors for productive dialogue to come about. These factors are built on the conditions developed by Mansbridge et al. (2006) in order to achieve productive dialogue. This paper contributes to the literature on dialogue and collaboration by taking into account the roles that managers and employees at different levels typically play in an MOP (Corley, 2004; Ring & Van de Ven, 1994). This paper has argued that temporal embeddedness is a design parameter at the level of company management, i.e., the management of a firm can choose for repeated projects with the same partners, leading to increased temporal embeddedness. Equality is a factor that can be influenced at both the level of company management and project management. If representatives of the firms participating in an MOP choose to interact on the basis of equality, productive disagreement, leading to better knowledge of each other's preferences and assumptions, becomes possible. A larger scope of mandate is important both at the level of project management and project execution. Only then actors at these levels have sufficient leeway to both discursively explore ways of consummate collaboration, and act upon them. Finally, this paper has purported that co-location of actors involved in project execution is helpful, because of the increased possibility of rich conversations this allows. To the extent that dialogues commensurate with consummate collaboration arise under these conditions, these are expected to influence the

accounts of interests of self and others of actors involved in the MOP, and to change their collaborative behaviors. Whether these micro-level changes will add up to a shift towards consummate collaboration within the entire MOP is difficult to say, but this paper has discussed some factors that comes to the conclusion that such a distributed change process will not easily reach a "tipping point". The result may also be hypocritical conversations and accounts that are at odds with collaborative practices.

This paper has focused on conditions influencing the social construction of interests within an MOP, and abstracted from many other aspects. One factor that is important is the nature of the task. Complex tasks with unpredictable elements offer participants more opportunities for self-disclosure in dialogue, and hence more opportunities for constructing rich and deep accounts of interests of self and others. Simple, predictable tasks bring about clear-cut accounts of quid-pro-quos, deviation from which is almost unavoidably perceived as a breach (of promise, contract, good faith, etc.). Other factors that could influence collaboration in MOPs are described in the literature on social dilemmas. Kollock (1998) categorizes solutions to social dilemmas in three groups. Structural solutions consist in changing the pay-offs in the dilemma in such a way that cooperation becomes more attractive than defection. This can for instance be achieved through careful design of the contract. In the offshore industry experiments with project alliances have yielded promising results (Halman & Braks, 1999). Motivational solutions focus on changing the motivations of the participants, without changing the structure of the pay-off. For instance identification with the project team can be cultivated, e.g., through rituals like project kick-offs (Hamburger, 1992). In effect, this introduces an alternative index of preferences, next to the calculation of self-interest in a more narrow sense (Kollock, 1998). The emphasis on the social construction of interests seems to fall in Kollock's third category: strategic solutions that resolve the dilemma by increasing the salience of long-term collaboration, thus overcoming the temptation to defect in the present.

Changing a discourse is a slow and complicated process, and if some shortcut existed that would have been found long ago. All the same, it seems to us that learning to collaborate better across organizational boundaries is one of the main challenges for today's highly developed economies.

CHAPTER 4[1]

ACCOUNTS OF INTEREST AND COLLABORATIVE BEHAVIOR IN PROJECTS

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on four conditions for discourse, temporal embeddedness, scope of mandate, equality and co-location, and explores how these differ between participants in multi-organizational projects in their social construction of interests. This paper takes a process perspective by looking how these conditions and conceptions of interest evolve over time within an MOP. The accounts of interest reflecting diverse discursive processes are considered to explore which conditions are most likely to lead to interest construction conducive to consummate collaboration. This study followed one large shipbuilding project over a period of 1,5 years and analyzed the accounts given by representatives of three large companies across disciplines and at different hierarchical levels. This paper focused on conditions that are conducive to open and constructive dialogue, like temporal embeddedness of relationships, the scope of mandate of company representatives, equality in the discourse between client and contractors, and co-location of representatives of the organizations involved. The findings suggest that these conditions are indeed associated with accounts of consummate collaboration.

[1] This chapter is the result of joint work with Niels Noorderhaven.

INTRODUCTION

Many industries become progressively more fragmented, increasing the need but at the same time also the difficulty of coordinating activities (Jones, Kierzkowski, & Lurong, 2005). This tension is particularly salient in project-based industries, where multiple organizations come together in a temporary coalition to carry out a particular project (Kenis et al., 2009). In such a multi-organizational project, or "MOP", organizations from different disciplines work together in a team to create a product. For each project, the project team may be new, composed of representatives from different organizations. Examples of MOPs can be found in the construction, aerospace, motion picture, defense, and shipbuilding industries (Gann & Salter, 2000; Scarbrough et al., 2004). Coordination problems may arise because the interests of the different parties are typically only partly aligned, frequently giving rise to situations with social dilemma-like characteristics (McCarter et al., 2011).

A social dilemma is a situation that is defined by two characteristics: (1) each player receives a higher payoff for a socially defecting choice than for a socially cooperative choice, no matter what the other players do; and (2) collectively players are better off if all cooperate than if all defect (Dawes, 1980). In these situations the rationality of an individual leads to collective irrationality (Kollock, 1998). One possible solution in order to solve the social dilemma is strict monitoring and sanctioning (Williamson, 1985). However, identifying a defector may be difficult when there are many parties, such as in the situation of a MOP (Zeng & Chen, 2003). In addition, the ability and willingness to administer punishment may be questionable (Osterloh et al., 2002). Hence, some form of collaboration could give the answer to social dilemma type of situations.

There are different ways to characterize collaboration (Larsson et al., 1998; Monroe, 1994; Walton & McKersie, 1965). This paper uses the continuum ranging from "perfunctory collaboration" and "consummate collaboration" (Williamson, 1975). Perfunctory collaboration refers to a job attitude which is in line with minimally acceptable standards. Consummate collaboration, in contrast, refers to "an affirmative job attitude – to include the use of judgment, filling gaps, and taking initiative in an instrumental way" (Williamson, 1975: 69). In many instances behavior in line with consummate types of collaboration seems to be imperative in order to solve the social dilemmas in MOPs.

Experimental research shows that collaboration in social dilemma-like situations is much more prevalent than rational choice theories assume (Camerer, 1997), but how this works "remains a mystery" from this perspective (Ledyard, 1995: 172). This paper puts forth that in order to solve the mystery one needs to depart from the rational choice perspective of game theory in three ways.

Firstly, in game theoretical accounts interests are seen as given (Pruitt & Kimmel, 1977; Weber et al., 2004) and transparent to the individual, while this paper purports that conceptions of interests are social constructions that arise in the context of the individual (Gadamer, 1976; Monroe, 2001). Secondly, rational choice approaches focus on the individual, and neglect the social nature of interest conceptions. This paper argues that actors shape conceptions of interests of self and others in inherently social discursive processes (Whittle et al., 2010). Thirdly, rational choice approaches to social dilemmas tend to be static, as all relevant data are assumed to be already contained in the payoff matrix. In this paper the view is that perceptions and evaluations of contingent payoffs change over time as a result of discursive social processes (Lawrence et al., 1999; Salvatore, Davanzati, Potì, & Ruggieri, 2009), and hence the games people play are not given, but socially constructed and continuously reconstructed.

This paper focuses on factors influencing this discursive process of social construction of interests in MOPs, and is particularly interested in why social construction processes in some cases lead to perceptions of interests conducive to consummate collaboration, while in other cases more perfunctory types of collaboration prevail. Several authors question the static nature of rational choice theory with respect to interests and argue that interests are products of social construction processes (Justice, 2006; Monroe, 2001; Whittle & Mueller, 2011). However, few authors have examined how collaboration is discursively constructed by participants (Lotia & Hardy, 2008). This paper contributes to the literature by exploring how the interests of individuals are socially constructed through discourse. In line with the focus on discursive processes this study theorizes that factors identified as encouraging open and constructive dialogue increase the likelihood that interest perceptions conducive to consummate collaboration will be collectively constructed. This paper explores how these factors are associated with accounts of interest given by representatives of three companies engaged in a large shipbuilding project, across diverse disciplines and hierarchical levels and over time. The findings suggest that these conditions are indeed conducive to the social construction of interests congruent with accounts of consummate collaboration. Additionally, this paper shows how two types of dynamics influence how collaborative processes evolve: inherent project life cycle effects in which the tension tends to increase over time, and path-dependencies that cause early problems to lead to vicious cycles.

The paper proceeds as follows. In the next section the view of MOPs as social dilemmas is elaborated on, and the process of social construction of interests through discourse is discussed. Next this paper explores under what conditions discursive processes are most likely to lead to construction of interest conceptions congruent with consummate collaboration in MOPs. This leads

to the two research questions in this paper. Subsequently, this paper empirically examines conceptions of interests of actors from different companies and at different hierarchical levels involved in one shipbuilding project, at two different points in time. This paper concludes with a discussion of our findings and conclusions.

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF INTERESTS

Several authors discussing multi-party collaboration forms have applied a social dilemma approach (McCarter et al., 2011; Zeng & Chen, 2003). Similarities between social dilemma games and multi-party collaboration forms such as MOPs are the multiple participants and their interdependence on each other. The behavior of a participant has an effect on the outcome of all participants in the project. While other scholars examining multi-party alliances have taken a social dilemma approach, few authors have taken this perspective in project based settings. MOPs differ from intra-organizational teams, cross-sector partnerships, meta-organizations, and multi-party alliances on various aspects. First of all, MOPs face limited temporality. This temporality involves milestones and deadlines and affects the collaborative behavior of the individuals (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). Secondly, the team of the MOP consists of representatives from different organizations, who can have diverging goals and interests (Hardy et al., 2005). While members of an intra-organizational team work towards a shared goal, members from different organizations may have their own target in a project. Conceptualizing MOPs as repeated social dilemmas implies that it is assumed that MOPs are frequently characterized by constellations of interests such that the pursuit of individual goals leads to collectively suboptimal collective outcomes.

In a social dilemma two types of conflicts of interests can be observed. First of all, there can be a conflict between individual and collective interests (Van Lange & Joireman, 2008). A cooperative choice focuses on aligning the individual interests with the collective interests, while with a defective choice an individual aims to only fulfill the individual interests (Monroe, 1994). The second type of conflict occurs in repeated social dilemmas, and pertains to a temporal conflict between short-term and long term interests (Van Lange & Joireman, 2008). Although a defective choice may be better for an actor in a single round of the game, it may foreclose a more advantageous cooperative equilibrium in the longer run (Weber & Murnighan, 2008). The pursual of the individual interests of the short term gains competes with the collective interests in the long run. The two conflicts of interests are linked: the temporal conflict is caused by the tendency to revert to defective decisions in the current game.

The tension between cooperation and competition that exists in social dilemmas can also be seen in MOPS (McCarter et al., 2011; Zeng & Chen, 2003). Parties need to collaborate if they want to achieve the best overall project result. However, parties may have a tendency to compete with each other for the benefits, as these are shared among the parties (Larsson et al., 1998; Zeng & Chen, 2003).

This paper conceptualizes cooperative and defective choices as "consummate" and "perfunctory" collaboration, respectively. This distinction was introduced by Blau and Scott (1962), and subsequently by Williamson (1975) and many other scholars in organizational economics (Brown et al., 2010). This paper sees these concepts as part of a continuum where perfunctory and consummate collaboration satisfy different opposing interests. As indicated above, perfunctory collaboration aims for the individual, short term interests, whereas consummate collaboration aims for the collective, long term interests. Nevertheless, as Monroe (1994) indicates behavior of an individual is not purely self-interested. Individuals behave not purely in line with the extreme ends of the continuum of perfunctory and consummate behavior. Their behavior may have elements that satisfies both their self-interests as well as the collective interests. These types of behavior therefore form a continuum. Consummate collaboration includes behaviors like exerting efforts beyond the contract, taking initiatives, sharing of knowledge, and creating shared representations of actions with respect to joint goals (see Blau & Scott, 1962; Clague, 1993; Lindenberg & Foss, 2011). In line with this, consummate collaboration in the context of an MOP would seem to require a shared social construction of what good collaboration is (Keller & Loewenstein, 2011). "Good collaboration" could for instance include emphasizing longer-term, rather than short-term interests. This would steer individuals away from immediate material self-interest and focus more on collective interests (Hunt et al., 2010).

This paper argues that consummate and perfunctory types of collaboration are driven by different conceptions of the interests of self and others. The interests pursued by an individual can lie on a continuum ranging from self-interest to collective interest (Hardin, 1968; Polzer, 2004; Wit & Kerr, 2002). Self-interested actions are defined as actions that aim at fulfilling a personal benefit, goal or desire (Cropanzano et al., 2005). Collective interests satisfy the goals of the collective of players, including the interests of the individual (Monroe, 1994). These self-interests and collective interests may be perceived differently by each actor involved (Medlin, 2006). If in a social dilemma players focus on their own interests only (and assume the others to do so, too), defection is the rational choice. In this situation every individual competes for the highest individual part (Larsson et al., 1998). A focus on individual interests is associated with perfunctory cooperation, in which

individuals compete with each other. A cooperative choice entails a certain degree of self-renunciation, where a part of the individual payoff is sacrificed for a larger collective gain (Brown et al., 2010). With consummate collaboration the individuals aim for jointly creating a larger pie (Larsson et al., 1998). In a repeated social dilemma players can either focus exclusively on the present game, or on future rounds (at the same time). Here consummate collaboration is associated with a long-term perspective, so that cooperation in the present round is valued also because it leads to better outcomes in future rounds of the game. Thus consummate collaboration requires a focus on collective interests, as well as a conception of self-interest that includes the longer term. Perfunctory collaboration is associated with a focus on the immediate self-interest. But where do these conceptions of interest come from?

From a game-theoretical perspective the constellation of interests is a given that is transparent to the players, and that can be represented in succinct form in the payoff matrix (Pruitt & Kimmel, 1977). Such an approach must assume that the individual is transparent to herself. I know who I am, and what I want is self-evident to me. However, the increasingly radical questioning of the possibility of complete self-understanding is one of the dominant motives of twentieth-century social philosophy (see, e.g., Gadamer, 1976; Monroe, 2001; Ricoeur, 1991). What one's interests are is something one needs to discover or even invent. This issue has been taken up in various literatures (Justice, 2006; Monroe, 2001; Woolgar, 1981). The idea that people can have a false concept of their self-interest was developed in Marxist theory, and Dobbin (1994) affirms that interest articulation was traditionally envisioned as a process between social classes. More recent approaches focus on individuals, and concede that preferences are not immediately transparent to actors, but may in the process of "elicitation" be biased or framed, depending on situational factors, the order in which alternatives are presented, or the words in which they are described (Slovic, 1995; Tversky & Kahneman, 1981). This view suggests that preferences are present in the self in their pure form, but depending on various factors become biased in their effect on actual choices, in an automatic, subconscious process, without appreciable psychic effort. Some researchers go much further, and acknowledge that "people have a difficult time, not merely selecting an alternative, but more fundamentally knowing what their own desires are" (Bagozzi, 1995: 274).

Hence learning to know one's interests requires sensemaking, defined by Weick (1995) as the complex processes through which organizational actors socially construct their realities. This definition stresses the performativeness of sensemaking, i.e., sensemaking does not so much lead actors to an already existing reality, but rather creates that reality. This paper asserts that this also holds true for interests. Salvatore, Davanzati, Potí & Ruggieri (2009: 169) refer to the power of

sensemaking to "shape the payoff". Whereas standard rational choice theory holds that the payoff is known before the choice is made, in a sensemaking perspective payoffs and hence conceptions of interests of self and others are largely social constructions. Bagozzi also suggested that interests are social constructions (1995: 274) when he tentatively hypothesized that "some felt desires are in fact implicitly (i.e., mentally through vicarious or similar processes) or explicitly (i.e., through negotiation or other social processes) constructed jointly with others". This is in line with Wildavsky's (1994) view that outside of the social context interests have little meaning.

Sensemaking processes can take a variety of forms (Maitlis, 2005), and this paper explores the question whether construction of conceptions of interest conducive to consummate collaboration are based in different sensemaking processes than construction of interests congruent with perfunctory collaboration. Analyses of sensemaking have tended to focus on the extent to which these processes are guided, i.e., the influence of sensegiving activities (Maitlis, 2005; Vaara & Monin, 2010). However, in an interorganizational context there is less scope for such sensegiving as the sensemaking takes place among representatives of organizations who are not in a formal hierarchical relationship. Nevertheless, discursive sensemaking processes are equally important in this context (Jørgensen, Jordan, & Mitterhofer, 2012). As expounded in the next section, this paper sees equality between actors as an important characteristic of discourse congruent with consummate collaboration and as one of the factors stimulating participants to open up their basic assumptions to scrutiny by self and other.

There are two additional aspects of the conception of interests as social constructions that is important to highlight. Firstly, social construction of interests is a process. From a process perspective, organizational phenomena are continuously created and changed through the interactions of agents (Langley & Tsoukas, 2010), and the same seems to apply to conceptions of interests of self and others. In a social constructivist view actors construct their interests by looking at each other and by responding to what they see (Scott, 1995: 137). Hence, interest conceptions are not static but change in response to observed behaviors of self and others. Secondly, the process of social construction of interests is of a fundamentally discursive nature. Language is not merely an instrument to communicate desires and preferences, it is the meaning expressed in language through which these desires and preferences come into being (Gadamer, 1976). Consequently, "interests cannot precede the discourse but are an effect of it" (Lawrence et al., 1999: 491). Whereas in a traditional game-theoretic analysis the structure of the game – the frame of contingent pay-offs – is taken to be exogenous, the dilemma is at least partly the participants' own making if interests of self and others are products of discursive social construction processes (cf.

Gore & Cross, 2011). According to Clegg (1989: 181) "It cannot be maintained that interests are formulated outside the conditions of particular discursive practices and struggles".

Looking at discursive interest constructions it is important to distinguish between different roles within the company (Hardy et al., 2005). Individuals have different perceptions and expectations on how other individuals behave in the project. These perceptions are a function of their organizational role (Ring & Van de Ven, 1994). An organizational role can be defined as "standardized patterns of behavior required of all persons playing a part in a given functional relationship" (Katz & Kahn, 1978: 43). In addition, Corley (2004) argued that individuals at different hierarchical levels can have different frames of references. He used three types of hierarchical levels: top management, middle management and operational employees to show the differences of identification between these levels. Therefore, this paper also distinguishes between different hierarchical levels, to explore the different social construction processes of interests.

In the next section ideas about how conditions for discourse may influence social construction of interests are developed.

TYPES OF DISCOURSE

Communication influences people's preferences (Sally, 1995), and an individual discovers her conception of self-interest through a discursive sensemaking processes. The mediation of language plays a pivotal role in any social construction process (Patriotta & Spedale, 2009), and this is even the case when social influences are ostensibly not mediated by language, for instance, if someone observes behaviors. Observed behaviors of self and others are integrated in a person's "self-narrative" (Bruner, 2004) in a sensemaking process that is of a fundamentally linguistic nature (Robichaud et al., 2004).

Whereas all conversations may be expected to impact on conceptions of interests, not all types of conversations are equally likely to contribute to accounts of interests congruent with consummate collaboration. In his paper Franco (2006) distinguishes five types of conversation: negotiation, debate, persuasion, deliberation and dialogue. The first three seem to revolve around the individual interest rather than the collective interests. In their definition of negotiations Gergen, McNamee and Barrett (2002: 81) conclude that parties in negotiations "are encouraged to identify their basic interests, what they want from the negotiation and how important it is for them". This implies a stress on the individual interests of the parties involved in the negotiations. Prior to negotiations parties may explore the assumptions underlying the individual interests of the different parties involved. These explorations are, however, not part of the negotiation conversation. The second

type of conversation, debate, is also not aimed at creating a shared point of view (Isaacs, 2002; Roberts, 2002). The intention of a debate is to prove your own point and prove the other party wrong. Persuasion is the third type of conversation and, again, stresses the individual interests. Unlike the previous two, persuasion does not set the parties against each other. In persuasion, "each participant tries to legitimize their particular proposition or point of view through evidence or persuasive argument. A persuaded party will thus change his or her initial positions and commit to that of the persuader party" (Franco, 2006: 814). In order for the persuasion to be successful one of the parties has to adopt the vision of the other party. There does not seem to be an a-priori reason to link this type of conversation with the construction of either shared, long-term interests or individual short-term interests. Persuasively advocating a point of view regarding interests, if successful, could lead to more consummate or to more perfunctory collaboration.

The last two conversation types, deliberation and dialogue, seem to be concerned less with the individual interest and more likely to prove helpful in solving a social dilemma. These types share some commonalities and as a consequence are very hard to disentangle in practice. The difference between the two is the concreteness of the underlying decision process. Deliberation has a stronger association with concrete action (Franco, 2006; Roberts, 2002). According to Franco (2006) deliberations follow from the need to come to a decision concerning a specific action. Dialogue, in contrast, does not have this strong link with a concrete decision or problem (Burkhalter et al., 2002). It "is not about judging, weighing, or making decisions, but about understanding and learning. Dialogue dispels stereotypes, builds trust, and enables people to open to perspectives that are very different from their own" (Heierbacher, 2007: 103). Franco (2006) claims that a dialogue is aimed at the creation of a joint meaning and understanding between the participants. Due to the arguments put forward it is felt that out of the five types of conversation deliberation and dialogue are the most helpful for parties to resolve a social dilemma by engaging them in a joint sensemaking process which leads to the creation of shared, long term interests. For this reason this paper will look a bit more closely at the characteristics of and conditions for deliberation and dialogue.

Deliberation is "debate and discussion aimed at producing reasonable, well-informed opinions in which participants are willing to revise preferences in light of discussion, new information, and claims made by fellow participants" (Chambers, 2004: 309). While deliberation always takes place in the context of a concrete issue, mostly an issue that requires a decision, a deliberative process may also include an episode of dialogue, during which the participants do not focus on the problem at hand but try to reach a deeper understanding of self and other (Burkhalter et al., 2002).

An essential aspect of dialogue is that all parties involved are willing to re-assess their own vision and often hidden (to themselves as well as others) assumptions. Ford (1999) explains that a dialogue is "a form of consciously constructed conversation in which participants engage in a sustained and collaborative investigation into the underlying assumptions and certainties that underlie their everyday experiences and relationships with the intent of creating more effective interactions". The positions of interlocutors are often covered with layers of tacit assumptions (Linder, 2002). By participating in a dialogue the interlocutors are able to develop a language to understand their own interests by discussing their individual experiences (Mansbridge, 2006). Isaacs (2002) describes dialogue as a process which enables reflection on ones assumptions with the power to alter self-made limits. The perspective of the interlocutors on taken for granted truths result in self-distanciation (Tsoukas, 2009). This reasoning implies an underlying willingness to distance oneself from one's own basic assumptions, as well as the willingness to understand those of the other. By taking the response of the other party seriously one is able to understand one's own utterance in a different light and therefore produces cognitive change. Therefore this paper continues with the concept of dialogue.

CONDITIONS FOR DISCOURSE IN MULTI-ORGANIZATIONAL PROJECTS

In order to reach productive dialogue certain conditions need to be met. Mansbridge, Hartz-Karp, Amengual and Gastil (2006), state that an ideal situation for productive dialogue is characterized by consensus, rationality, freedom and equality. The rationality assumption is also mentioned by Habermas as part of the ideal speech (1979). He argues that dialogue is characterized by a "gentle but obstinate" claim to reason (Habermas, 1979: 3). Business interactions are also characterized by rationality (Gillette, 1984; Gratton & Ghoshal, 2003). In this paper it is assumed that rationality is present, and the focus is on the other factors of consensus, freedom and equality, mentioned by Mansbridge et al. (2006).

Temporal Embeddedness

First of all, the question is: which conditions lead to consensus. Consensus seeking implies that parties forego, on the one hand, the option of exercising power, and on the other hand of withdrawing from the discourse without coming to a resolution. This implies a commitment to the discourse that goes beyond the instrumental calculative engagement typical for business relations. "Relational engagement" is necessary, in which the interlocutants take responsibility for the joint task in which they are involved as well as for their relationship (Tsoukas, 2009). Taking

responsibility for the relationship implies that investments in order to maintain the relationship over time and into the future need to be made. Hence the relationship needs to be "temporally embedded" (Rooks et al., 2000). Any MOP is by definition of limited duration, but may be embedded to a stronger or a lesser degree in a series of projects. Representatives from companies may have worked together before, and there may be an possibility to work together again in the future (Jones & Lichtenstein, 2008). Research indicates that the effects of the "shadow of the past" (duration and frequency for example) and the "shadow of the future" (the expectation of future transactions) mutually reinforce each other (Batenburg et al., 2003; Rooks et al., 2000).

This paper expects that the temporal embeddedness of relationships within an MOP influence the conditions of the discourse, and through this the sensemaking processes with regard to interests. Parkhe (1993) mentions that individuals rely on cumulative past experiences as a guide for future behavior in order to overcome opportunistic behavior. Temporal embeddedness may be partly dictated by industry characteristics, but it can also be influenced by managers. Companies can make it their policy to do business with preferred partners, as long as experiences are positive. Alternatively, they can also let potential partners compete against each other, in order to improve their bargaining position. Players at higher organizational levels may vary in both forward-looking and backward-looking temporal embeddedness. At lower levels project executors may have experiences from having worked together earlier, on the organizational or the interpersonal level, which may increase their ability to work together and the level of trust (Laan et al., 2012). But at this level the prospect of future common projects is of less concern, and hence less likely to influence social construction of interests.

Scope of Mandate

The second condition mentioned by Mansbridge et al. (2006) for productive dialogue is freedom. The freedom condition may be expected to be precarious in the context of MOPs. The freedom of actors may be restricted in so far as they are acting as boundary spanners representing their organizations. Clopton (1984) argues that individuals acting as representatives of their organization will be less inclined to engage in integrative bargaining than individuals acting on their own behalf. Factors producing this effect are that the representative is held accountable for the outcome of the negotiation, and the representative's loyalty and commitment to his organization (Clopton, 1984). It seems plausible that these observations with regard to bargaining style can be generalized to the propensity to engage in dialogue, as generally "people fear being judged inadequate by their 'tribe'" (Isaacs, 2002: 205). Hence, the freedom of the actors involved in

discourses within MOPs is a factor worth studying. In practical terms this means that this paper needs to consider the scope of the mandates of boundary-spanning actors in an MOP. If boundary spanners have a narrow scope, the possibility to come to a genuine dialogue with counterparts from other organizations in the MOP is undermined, and the possibility of coming to conceptions of interests conducive to consummate collaboration becomes more remote.

The scope of the mandate will vary strongly with the hierarchical level of participants. A broad mandate offers players the opportunity to focus on long-term benefits in a given collaboration, also if this implies renouncing short-term gains, or even incurring short-term losses. At higher levels the scope of the mandate is typically large, although even here some top managers may be under high pressure from, e.g., investors to deliver financial results. The degree of freedom given to project executors in contrast is to a large extent a design variable. If project executors operate within a very detailed and rigid project plan there is little scope for collaborative behavior, even if they would be inclined. However, companies participating in an MOP can also opt to give their project executors broader mandates, allowing them more degrees of freedom in organizing the work with their colleagues from other firms in a flexible way. This paper contends that such a broad mandate creates a more fertile ground for social construction of interests conducive to consummate collaboration.

Equality

Presence of the equality condition (Mansbridge et al., 2006) is also far from self-evident in the discourse within MOPs. MOPs mostly consist of a company that acts as client, and other companies that act as contractors. There often is a clear pecking order between these companies, as for instance is the case between main contractor and subcontractors in a construction project (Stinchcombe, 1985). Client firms are generally unwilling to relinquish their more powerful position in the implicit hierarchy, mainly because they fear opportunism from the side of the contractors (Crespin-Mazet & Portier, 2010; Kadefors, 2004). This may lock parties in the MOP into an equilibrium of perfunctory cooperation. Nevertheless, productive dialogue could come about if all participants in a conversation at least temporarily treat each other as equals (Roberts, 2002). Equal parties feel more free to disagree (Kabanoff, 1991), which increases the possibilities of coming to productive dialogue. When individuals are from different hierarchical levels it may be more difficult to come to productive dialogue. On the other hand, when actors are from the same hierarchical level, treating each other as equals is facilitated. Hence, equality is also a factor to take into account when studying social construction of interests in MOPs.

The degree of equality between companies and individuals participating in an MOP will be partly conditioned by contingencies like the relative sizes of the companies, and partly by the roles of client and supplier. Even legally independent contractors do not interact on a footing of strict equality if one has the role of the client and the other that of (potential) provider. But the parties can create an atmosphere in which they communicate on the basis of equality. To the extent that they succeed in doing so, they improve the conditions for social construction of interests congruent with consummate collaboration. Boundary spanners from different firms are more likely to interact as equals and on a collegial basis if they have regular informal face-to-face contact. In this sense, the conditions of equality and co-location are linked, and reinforce each other.

Co-location

An implicit assumption in the dialogue literature seems to be that the conversation takes place face-to-face. Physical proximity is an important factor influencing collaborative processes (Kraut et al., 2002) and should be taken into account. Specifically, face-to-face conversations are superior in terms of the possibility "to provide immediate feedback, to convey multiple cues, to support personalization, and to accommodate linguistic variety" (Yates & Orlikowski, 1992: 308-309). Experimental studies confirm the importance of face-to-face communication for establishing cooperation (Brosig, Weimann, & Ockenfels, 2003; Sally, 1995). Research shows that close collaboration is easier under the condition of proximity (Kahn & McDonough III, 1997). Laan, Noorderhaven, Voordijk and Dewulf (2011) describe how co-location of design team members from different companies in a project alliance in railway construction created beneficial effects.

In MOPs some discourses typically take place face-to-face, but others not. Some of the employees and managers involved in MOPs like construction projects or shipbuilding projects work side-by-side with colleagues from other organizations on the production site, while others remain at the premises of their own company. It is expected that in face-to-face social construction of interests conducive to consummate collaboration is more likely to take place. Therefore, this paper concludes that there will be better chances for a dialogue of consummate collaboration to arise when more managers and employees work side-by-side at a single location.

All in all, the extent to which the conditions of the discourse are conducive to consummate collaboration are likely to vary between MOPs, as well as within MOPs across diverse settings and over time. In the next section the effects of the presence or absence of conditions that this paper expects to find is summarized, and these will be empirically explored in one particular MOP.

Cross-Sectional Differences in Conditions

This paper expects conditions for constructive deliberation and dialogue to vary between and even within MOPs. Acknowledging these differences, this paper aims to look at the social construction of interests at the micro level.

Hence the first research question:

> *How do conditions for discourse differ between (groups) of participants in an MOP, and how does this influence the social construction of interests?*

As indicated above, some conditions, like scope of mandate, may be expected to differ systematically between hierarchical levels. Moreover, scope of mandate may also differ between companies, as some companies give more strict instructions to their boundary-spanning employees than others. Co-location will also vary, as some employees in MOPs work side-by-side with colleagues from other companies. The same is true for temporal embeddedness, in particular backward looking, and equality. The expectation is that these differences will lead to differentiation in the social construction of interests, even within a single MOP.

Changes in Conditions over Time

Apart from these cross-sectional differences, this paper expects the conditions for discourse to change over time. Like organizations, MOPs can be seen as consisting in the mutually interlocking behaviors of the participants, and these behaviors will transform over time in response to each other as well as to changes in the environment (Schultz, Maguire, Langley, & Tsoukas, 2012). There are several factors that may lead to dynamic development of the conditions for discourse and the associated social construction of interests. First of all, every project has its life cycle and behaviors differ between phases (Adams & Barnd, 2008). On one hand, in the early phases of an MOP parties still need to get adjusted to each other, which would indicate that the conditions for discourse may improve over time. On the other hand, towards the end of the project some participating firms may run out of their budget, which may result in a strong focus on the own bottom line, and less openness to discourses associated with consummate collaboration. Which of these two effects dominates may depend on many factors.

Secondly, there may be several feedback loops. In one of these feedback loops the discourse as it takes place within (a particular part of) the MOP could lead to the conditions for further conversations (e.g., if parties decide that they need to create more opportunities for face-to-face

interactions). Moreover, conceptions of interest as formed in a discourse may subsequently start to influence that discourse, as well as its conditions, e.g., when parties conclude that it is not in their interest to freely share information. Finally, the collaboration as it evolves over time and under influence of the conceptions of interest formed may in turn affect new discourses and reinforce or undermine earlier conceptions of interests (e.g., if observation of defective behavior cause a participant to calibrate earlier ideas concerning the interests of self and other, and make her less willing to converse openly. Due to these feedback mechanisms conceptions of interests and the associated collaboration may evolve in a path-dependent way. Hence the second research question:

> *How do conditions of discourse and conceptions of interest evolve over time within (groups of participants in) an MOP?*

In the next section the empirical study is described to explore these two research questions.

DATA AND METHODS

Differentiation and Changes in Accounts

This paper is interested in the accounts that are produced through conversations. In principle, one should study the conversations as these are the primordial mechanisms that produce accounts. However, there are two reasons to focus on accounts instead. First of all, every individual actor is involved in many different conversations with many different others, and possibly with contradicting contents. What counts in the end is how all of these together are collated into an account that gives meaning to the actor. Secondly, there is a methodological reason: conversations are fleeting and most often remain hidden from the researcher, accounts can be evoked and documented. Compared with more structured types of data accounts are more likely to yield also non-conscious meanings and motives (Orbuch, 1997). Nevertheless, it is important to think about the veracity of what people say in interviews. As Alvesson (2003) notes, interview responses may be an effort to construct a valued, coherent self-image, rather than an unbiased reflection of the interviewees' mind. However, this does not mean interview responses are not important. The self-constructions an actor wishes to convey in an interview reveal much of what she considers to be a meaningful rendering of the situation and what are appropriate thoughts and actions for an actor with her identity.

This paper is not interested in dialogue for its own sake because it is assumed that productive dialogue will lead to accounts commensurate with consummate collaboration. These accounts in

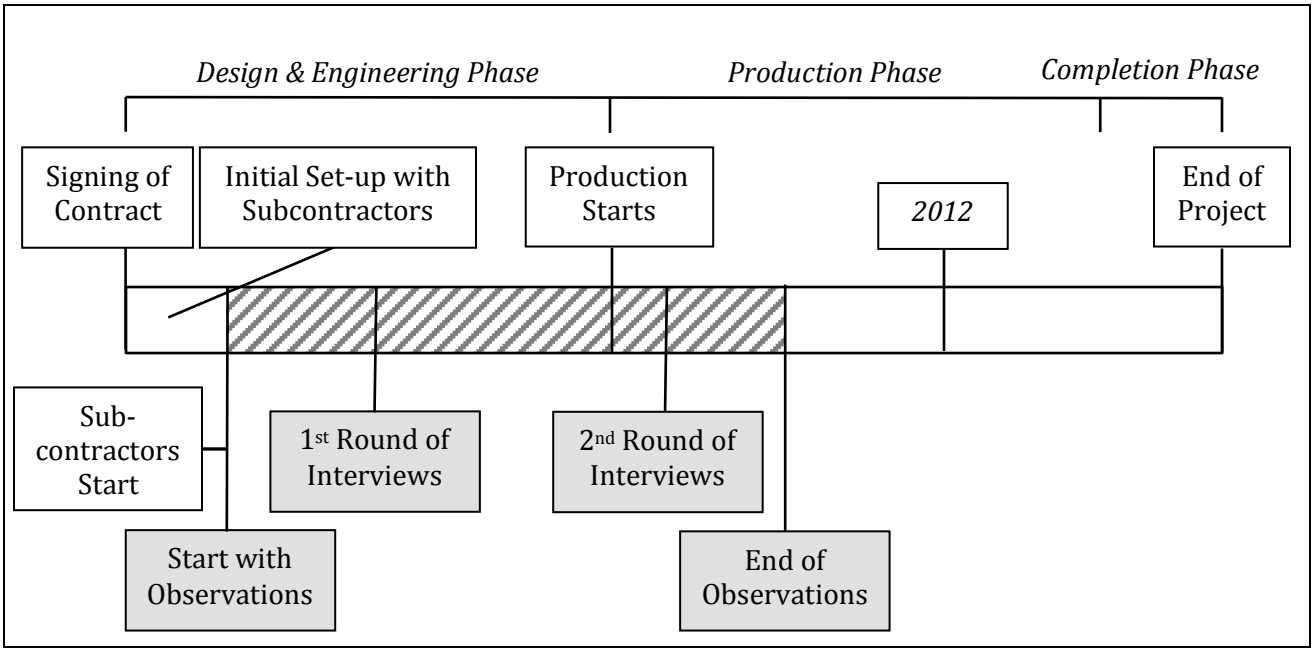
turn will influence the tendency to engage in consummately collaborative behaviors. First of all, the accounts at the level of the individual are important in order for productive dialogue to lead to changed behavior in the MOP. These accounts are generally closely related to conversations (Firth, 1995). More specifically, when it comes to collaboration and interests one needs to observe and talk with others to find out what is "normal", "rational", or "appropriate". Secondly, individuals need to act upon the new accounts produced in productive dialogue. Jacobs and Heracleous (2005) illustrate how dialogue can alter participants' mental models, which in turn enables new behaviors. Communication is "performative", i.e., it creates a new reality, within which the participants start interacting (Barrett et al., 1995; Ford & Ford, 1995). In that sense productive dialogue not only *can* change, but inevitably *does* change reality. Even if behaviors remain ostensibly unchanged, the meanings attached to it will have shifted.

Research Setting

This paper focuses on one construction project in the shipbuilding industry, taking a longitudinal approach by following the progress of the ship over eighteen months. The study started after the initial set up of the contracts between the main subcontractors, and the shipyard started the design and engineering phase. The timeline of the project with the phases of the project-life cycle and the moments of interviewing are depicted in Figure 4.1.

This study uses a single case study, as the project that is observed is unique in several ways to make this a 'revelatory case' (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Firstly, the ship that is constructed is one of the largest ever constructed at the yard of investigation. Due to the magnitude of the ship and the complexity of systems the process of collaboration between the organizations involved is particularly challenging. Secondly, the size of the budget makes this project important to the parties involved, and representatives from the yard and the main subcontractor agree that "if this ship fails we have a serious problem". Thirdly, the physical construction of the ship takes place in two different countries. Although the focus is on the design and engineering phase of the project, there is a temporal overlap with the construction activities. This study specifically follows the design and engineering phase of the project as it is believed that this phase shapes the collaboration in the remaining part of the project. Additionally, parties can make money in the design phase through design and engineering optimizations, while in the later phases (pre-outfitting, construction, installation, testing) companies typically can only lose money through cost overruns.

FIGURE 4.1
Timeline of the Project



Data Collection

This study uses non-participant observations and two rounds of interviews over eighteen months. The observations are done at three types of internal meetings at the shipyard. These include project meetings, purchasing-engineering meetings, and engineering team leader meetings that are held bi-weekly. The first is a meeting between the project leaders of the different departments involved to discuss the progress of the project. These participants come from the Engineering, Purchasing & Logistics, Project, Cost Control, and Planning departments. The second series of meetings is between Purchasing & Logistics and Engineering, with the purpose to discuss the status of all parts needed for the ship. The last series of meetings is between several levels of team leaders in Engineering. Each of the meetings observed normally takes around two hours or more. During the observations of the meetings, the focus was on the interaction between individuals and discourses that could be associated with the distinguished types of collaboration behavior. The unit of observation is the individual. The interest of the study is the conditions for discourse of the individual.

In addition, this study included two rounds of interviews with representatives from the three most important partners in the project. Most participants were interviewed twice and the two rounds were separated by almost one year. The interviews focus on accounts of interest that

portray conceptions of interests of self and others and on factors influencing these perceptions. In the second round of interviews there was an additional focus on the types of collaborative behavior and the associated accounts of interest. The data consists of extensive observation notes and transcriptions of around fifty interviews. The first round consists of almost twenty interviews and the second round of thirty interviews as some additional interviewees were added in the second round. The interview protocol can be found in Appendix I.

The participants in the meetings as well as the interviewees come from different organizational levels. In line with the hierarchical categorization of Corley (2004) the individuals are categorized into three groups. The three hierarchical levels are higher managers, project managers, and project executors. These categories are formed due to the different roles (Ring & Van de Ven, 1994) and associated observed differences in the conditions for discourse. The highest organizational level is the higher manager who bears profit responsibility. The project managers are boundary spanners who form the link with the other organizations. The lowest organizational level that is taken into account is the project executor who carries out operational tasks. Table 4.1 shows the number of interviewees at the shipyard and the subcontractors and their hierarchical levels.

TABLE 4.1
Number of Interviews and Hierarchical Level of Interviewees

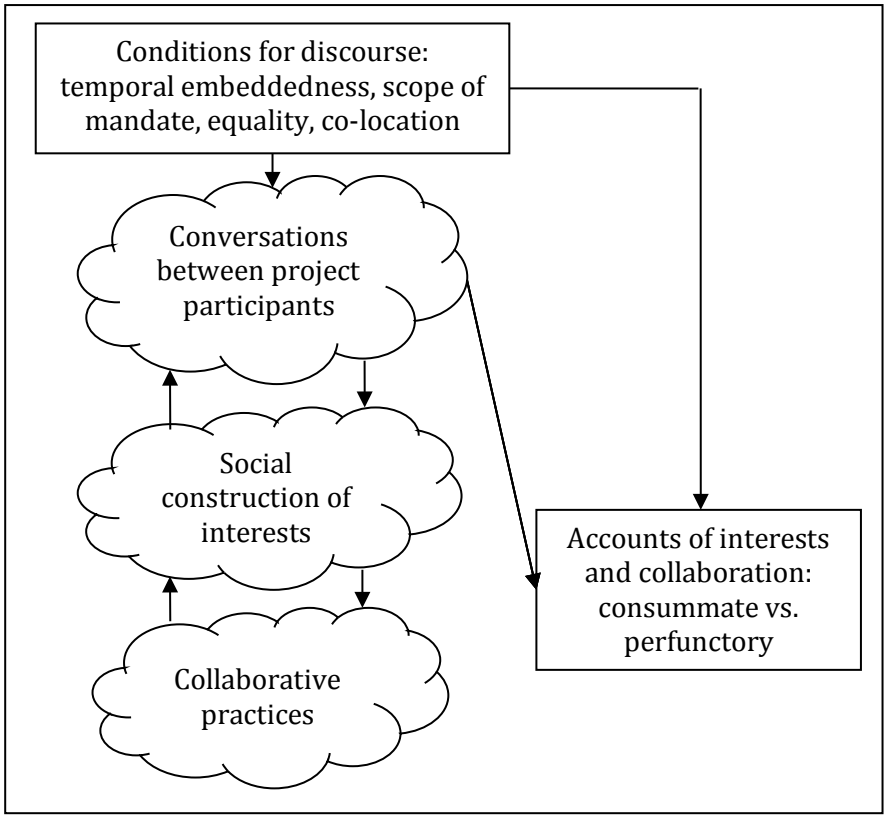
	Higher manager		Project manager		Project executors		**Total nr of interviews**
	Individual count	Interview count	Individual count	Interview count	Individual count	Interview count	
Shipyard	5	**8**	9	**15**	3	**4**	**27**
Subcontractors	5	**8**	4	**6**	5	**8**	**22**
	10	***16***	*13*	***21***	*8*	***12***	**49**

Analyses

The transcribed interviews were imported into a qualitative data analysis software package and subsequently analyzed inductively. The data are analyzed is the individual level. First the interviews were read to get an idea about how the respondents perceive their interests and the collaborative behaviors. Next, the text fragments were coded. In these text fragments the interviewees expressed accounts of interests in which certain types of collaborative behavior are described. Subsequently, the accounts of types of collaboration were qualitatively linked to conditions for discourse. Firstly, the factors that the interviewees themselves connected to the elements of consummate or perfunctory collaboration mentioned were looked at. Secondly, the four

factors discussed above – temporal embeddedness, scope of mandate, equality and co-location – both by analyzing the participant's accounts of these conditions and their effects and by bringing in information from other sources were examined. For instance, it was known who was co-located with whom in the project. Observations served to assess to what extent conversations between project participants in a natural setting do or do not exhibit the characteristics of constructive dialogue. Figure 4.2 represents the interrelations between the concepts of interest.

FIGURE 4.2
Conceptual Model of Conditions for Discourse and Accounts of Interest



FINDINGS

Consummate and Perfunctory Collaboration

The conceptualization of consummate and perfunctory collaboration is based on the literature. The first question when analyzing the data was whether this distinction would be corroborated by the interviews. Maybe not surprisingly it was easier to find descriptions of consummate collaboration. References to what this paper labels perfunctory collaboration were scarcer, and more often found when interviewees talked about other firms or about projects in the past.

A typical quote reflecting consummate collaboration is the following:

If you start discussing these things you make a lot of administrative fuzz and all in all it's small beer. So you say, it's fine, these 400 hours we're not going to fight about it. If it comes to 4000 hours it becomes a different story, then there is something going on. Then we will start a discussion, if we see that coming. If I receive signals from construction, about this is not going OK and those costs, etc. Then something is wrong, and at the least we will start to administer it. How can we restrict it? (Higher manager)

Elements of consummate collaboration in the interviews include, among other things:

- Not being unreasonable
- Implementing smart solutions that benefit both parties
- Solving conflicts
- Living up to the confidence given to you
- Pointing out possible design optimizations
- Pointing out possible design problems
- Helping other contractors on the ship
- Solving problems you have caused
- Don't fuss about small mistakes made by others.

In a typical quote regarding perfunctory collaboration the interviewee is talking in a general way on how collaboration can go wrong in shipbuilding projects:

Mostly all problems come at the same time. Because it is more complex than anticipated, it becomes, the planning becomes tighter, financially, the financial room for maneuvering also becomes more restricted. Then all parties will in the first instance look at themselves and try to spend as little as possible, of course. As such it is not strange that you don't any longer have the idea of working together. (Higher manager)

Some other elements of perfunctory collaboration that are mentioned are:

- Not doing extra work without previous agreement of extra payment
- Stopping your work if a job is outside the scope of the contract
- Forcing your own specifications and requirements on the other party
- Discuss about payments before thinking about a solution.

Of course, the absence of the various elements of consummate collaboration mentioned earlier can also be taken as a sign of perfunctory collaboration. The interview situation may have contributed to rhetorical mentioning of consummate collaboration elements in many interviews. Hence classification of interviewees as consummate or perfunctory collaborators was difficult.

Instead the focus was on the interview fragments that exemplified consummate or perfunctory collaboration (both sometimes occurred in one and the same interview), and connecting these to the conditions under which the interviewee worked. This study looked both at the four conditions discussed in the theory section and at the explanations that the interviewees themselves spontaneously offered.

Temporal Embeddedness

The time horizon (Parkhe, 1993; Zeng & Chen, 2003) is very important for the social construction of interests. Both past experiences and future expectations are taken into account. There are clear indications that positive past experiences will enhance the likelihood of taking responsibility for the joint task. Likewise, negative past experiences will make an individual less engaged with the situation and perceive his interests differently:

> *In the past we have bumped our head several times, because we went along, we all knew it, this is how it is going to be and in the end they say sorry, it costs money and the alteration is not happening. However, we were already heading in that direction and the way back was longer. [..] Then we had to deal with the detriment. […] In the past they took advantage of us and that is the danger of thinking along, being customer friendly, being flexible.* (Project executor)
>
> While all interviewees at the higher management level show temporal embeddedness in their accounts, there is more variety at the lower organizational levels. All interviewees give indications that positive and negative experiences have influenced how they perceive their interests. Encounters in the past, constituting the shadow of the past, thus influence the interest perceptions of the individuals. Most individuals mentioned that collaboration in the past with individuals and companies influenced their interest perceptions and collaborative behavior in the current project. Specifically, negative past experiences makes it more difficult to move towards consummate collaboration, because the other party is expected to choose for perfunctory collaboration. *Some people have a natural antipathy against that company. […] In previous project they had shortcomings, specifically at those points […]. People are afraid that it will happen again this project. […] When something happens, X will say, "I told you so".* (Project manager)
>
> *It is not that I think about it (future encounter), no, I do not consider it.* (Project executor)

Individuals at the highest organizational level explicitly take into account possible future dealings with partners (shadow of the future). Most interviewees from the project execution and project management levels in the organizations only take into account experiences in the current

project when they reflect upon their interests. These individuals do see the importance of relationships in collaboration, nevertheless, investing in these relationships is not seen as a priority. Higher managers in contrast look at relationships as highly temporally embedded, also towards the future. Their accounts of interests are commensurate with consummate collaboration. Trust between the companies is of importance here. If that trust is breached consummate collaboration may be hindered.

> *Then you stand opposite each other, for a future project that is not good. […] In general, we say we will do it and we trust that you will handle it decently afterwards. If that trust is compromised, the next time you will think, if you want us to do that, we first wait for the order before we do it.* (Higher manager)

Scope of Mandate

The scope of mandate increases with higher organizational levels. Respondents at the project execution level indicate that their scope is usually limited to technical aspects, excluding financial interests. With a limited scope of mandate the interviewees also report a restricted sense of responsibility. Therefore, they are less inclined to reflect upon or engage in dialogue about these interests. Higher organizational levels have a broader scope and are therefore more concerned with integrating diverging interests. Their accounts of interest seem to reflect discourse with their partners.

> *I do not have anything to do with money issues. In principle we look at what the contract says. […] If the system does not comply with the contract, something has to be changed. If that costs money, that is not my problem, I only focus on the technical part.* (Project executor)
>
> *The more open conversations you have with each other, the better something goes and the more you are inclined to say: I think it is not going well, it doesn't deliver many benefits for me. However, I see you are heading in that direction and it is not going well, have a look at it. I am more inclined to say something when we have a good relationship with that company than when we are on opposite sides of each other.* (Higher manager)

Whereas the temporal embeddedness of relationships varies considerably, depending on both the question whether particular partners have worked together before or expect to do so in the future, the scope of mandate is strongly company dependent. Some companies give their employees more freedom in their decision taking, while others are very strict in their coordination. Project executors from one of the subcontractors have a broader scope in line with the type of collaborative behavior that is supported in this company. This subcontractor is a company that has a long term

focus with a tendency to encourage taking initiative beyond the contract to sustain the relationship with the client. This broader scope in addition with the encouraging environment makes it more likely that employees construct their interest in line with consummate collaboration in their relationships with the client and with other suppliers.

(Here in our company) we first solve it technically and then we will talk about money. (Project executor)

It is not a fixed demarcation line, like when we go over X euro's, we're done. […] I am convinced that this pays off more than if you claim every hour. (Higher manager)

Equality

This paper found references to two kinds of equality in the interviews, and in both cases there was a clear connection to consummate collaboration. The first type of equality was that in which the informal hierarchy implicit in the roles of client and contractor was temporarily suspended. Several interviewees from the shipyard talked about the importance of collaborating as a team.

It's not about the relation, that we are the customer, you are the supplier, but simply about tackling a project together. (Project manager)

From the side of the suppliers the point is made that if the yard strongly assumes the role of the boss or sticks to the letter of the contract, they will respond in kind.

If a shipyard has a very strict attitude, last Friday we spent two hours cleaning up your mess, here's the bill […], then you start thinking, wait a minute. Then we will do the same. […] They want something changed, the hell with them, we have done our job and we won't do it. First send us a formal purchase order and then we may start doing it. (Higher manager)

Hence, equality between client and contractor is always fragile ("when problems occur this will come to an end"). But at the same time this equality is clearly connected to consummate collaboration in the minds of the interviewees, in particular with open communication and acquiring a better understanding for the other's situation.

The second type of equality mentioned by some interviewees was that between project managers and project executors. The idea is that if an executor has the required capabilities it is counterproductive to micro-manage such a person.

You could restrict the freedom of these people to such an extent that they will do only what you ask them to do. But then the interaction [with representatives from other organizations] becomes so difficult, to function really like a team. (Higher manager)

This type of equality is clearly linked to the scope of mandate.

Co-location

Most respondents take the benefits associated with being co-located for granted. Only when the respondents were asked why this makes working easier did the respondents think about it. All lower levels respondents feel that being co-located makes working together easier because face-to-face contact is less formal and quicker than communication at a distance. This shorter distance in communication, which is created by co-locating individuals from different organizations, gives a bigger chance to discourse in line with consummate behaviors.

Drawing, making a sketch of the situation. It is much easier if you can draw, then if have to explain yourself in an email. (Project manager)

Email is of course easy because you are quick with a lot of things, sending it to each other if you are and stay on the same wavelength. When there is a reason to sit face-to-face, it usually means friction has been created. Then it is always better to sit face-to-face because you can see each other's attitude, body language and you can also see what somebody's position is in the matter and how to deal with that. (Higher manager)

What also comes to the fore when looking at co-location is that the individuals who are co-located with representatives from other organizations feel more connected to the project. The close proximity of the individuals from different organizations makes that they incorporate the different interests in their own interest construction. The co-location of the individuals makes them feel more responsible towards the project, which makes them also more temporally embedded. Co-location and temporal embeddedness are interrelated in their influence on collaborative behavior.

You know the people, you know who they are, and you make small talk with them. Then you know how to approach somebody, to let's say reach the optimal result. When you work at a distance, you have a different way of working. It becomes more formal, sometimes it is ok, but often it means a lot more time. (Project manager)

In addition, also references to co-location in connection to an increase of insights into the consequences of their own and others' actions were found. This insight into the consequences and consequently the associated interests makes them more likely to engage in dialogue supporting consummate types of behavior. With a distance in location individuals less often encounter others' interests and do not have to talk and deal with these. Facing these possible diverging interests leads to discourse with the aim at finding a solution that satisfies both their interests.

Because they sit here in the company the connections are very short. If we have questions we go to them. You often notice that if you need to take care of business, you unconsciously have ideas about that. If you respond via email you hold on to your own ideas. You will get an answer, however, it is

often not the answer you were expecting. While if you sit with the person and talk about the issue, he may take out a sketch, which then turns out to be a different one you had in mind.[…] That way of collaborating is very important. (Project manager)

Although co-location can quite easily be established in a project, it has to be kept in mind that co-location just by itself may not lead to consummate collaboration. Co-location can benefit consummate collaboration in combination with one of the other conditions present, such as a broad scope of mandate, an equal or a high temporal embedded relationship.

Differences over Time

Start of the Project

At the beginning of the project, at the moment of contracting the main subcontractors, the shipyard considered the approach to the project. Due to the importance of the project to the shipyard and the experience of suboptimal outcomes in the recent past, the shipyard decided to take a different approach with this project. This different approach focuses on collaboration from the early stages of the project on, in order to try to prevent issues in the project leading to suboptimal outcomes. The shipyard initiated this focus by having kick-off meetings with the two main subcontractors before the project started (in Figure 4.1 on page 71, this is during the initial set up phase). In these meetings the main idea was to get insight into each other's work and ideas, to enhance communication and understanding of each other further along in the project. This strong focus on collaboration may have set the stage for more consummate collaboration. Focusing on collaboration brings considerations regarding individual and organizational interests more to the surface. In a setting where collaboration is so explicitly emphasized, individuals might think more about their own roles in the collaboration with others.

Most individuals involved are well aware how essential collaboration in this project is, and often compare the current way of working together with the way of working together in previous projects. Especially individuals in contact with other companies (from the shipyard or the subcontractors) are confronted with new aspects of collaboration and mention this in their interviews. This different approach is not apparent to everybody, however. The individuals at lower levels of the companies are less involved in the efforts to focus attention to collaboration in the project. This issue makes that individuals involved in the project at this level may look differently at their own and others' interests.

In addition to the kick-off meetings the shipyard also designated two integration managers. These integration managers are responsible for the contact between the shipyard and the

subcontractors. Additionally, the integration managers are responsible for the integration of the different phases of the project over time. One goal of these integration managers is to look at the interests of the subcontractor and the shipyard and try to find a solution that fits both parties. In addition, their goal is to integrate the transfer of the ship smoothly of one phase associated with one department to another phase associated with a different department. These incentives were also initiated in order to prevent suboptimal outcomes. Both the shipyard and the subcontractors highly valued these integration managers. Especially the subcontractors express that they feel that their interests are more taken into account than in previous projects.

The third issue that the shipyard changed for this project was that employees from the subcontractor are stationed at the shipyard. These individuals act as mediators between the shipyard and their own company. This exercise is a way to enhance collaboration between the shipyard and the subcontractors, to prevent costs associated with suboptimal outcomes. Also this initiative is appreciated by the subcontractors as well as by representatives from the shipyard. Due to the shorter communication lines between the shipyard and the subcontractors issues in the engineering phase were resolved quicker.

> *This [kick-off meeting] was actually the first time for me, I have several years of experience and I have seen several times that people are at cross-purposes. I think that if they have seen each other and talked to each other they come more easily in contact with each other. […] I think we have reaped the fruits of that meeting so far, the communication is much better* (Project manager)

The approach that the shipyard together with the subcontractors took may have facilitated the awareness of interests in collaboration, which made discourse conducive to consummate collaboration in the beginning of the project more likely.

Project Lifecycle

The cycle through which the project moves is often mentioned by respondents. Project life cycles is an important aspect to consider as different phases have different dynamics (Adams & Barnd, 2008; Pinto & Prescott, 1988). Over the project life cycle time pressure is generally expected to increase and the budgetary constraints to become stricter. This puts pressure on the collaboration, which is, however, moderated by the four conditions discussed earlier.

The effect of temporal embeddedness in the form of having worked together in past projects may be expected to become progressively weaker during the project, as more recent experiences supersede those from earlier collaborations. These experiences were studied that led to an approach or attitude that was difficult to explain to outsiders. Also the approach used for this ship

might have created a group of people that were highly embedded, which created a distance with others that did not work in this project:

> *I notice it when I talk with people who have not worked [on this project] and explain what I want them to do. Then I realize, I can't blame this guy that I have to explain it in detail because he comes from a different project. He hasn't gone through it all, I talk about a completely integrated planning, he thinks, pooh, is that really true? Then I say, go have a look at how we work [in this project], go into it* (Higher manager).

This quote also suggests that respondents who are co-located during the development of the project, may become stronger temporally embedded in their relationships. Over the project life cycle activities like engineering and design (during the engineering phase of the project life cycle) became less co-located (see Figure 4.1 on page 71). At the same time activities like construction and production (during the production phase) show an increased co-location. But the effect of co-location on collaboration in the actual production is different from that in the design and engineering phase, because *"at the front end of the project you have to gain money [because of optimizations], while at the back end of the project [in production] you can only lose money"* (Project manager). The net effect is likely to be an overall decrease of the importance of co-location over the project life cycle.

Another aspect related to the co-location and the project life cycle was that the production of the ship took place in a different country than the design and engineering activities. Several representatives of the shipyard moved to the production location. In addition, new companies that were responsible for production activities became involved in the project. This might have had an effect on the temporal embeddedness. Due to the fact that the activities were shifted to a different location, with sometimes different individuals representing the same or new organizations, people might have felt less commitment to the future.

Moreover it is not clear whether the shadow of the future in general will become stronger over time. This may be the case if new projects are imminent, but in this project this did not occur or played no role. This might also be due to the long time horizon associated in this project. Whereas, in most projects individuals are associated for only one or two years with the project, this project lasts for over five years. This long time horizon might make that individuals do not incorporate future encounters in their interest constructions, especially at the lower levels.

It is likely that the scope of mandate tends to become smaller over time, especially as budgets are getting tighter there may be little leeway to go beyond the book in collaborating with partners. This may especially be expected to hold for higher organizational levels concerned with money

issues, and this may change their collaborative behavior. In the beginning of the project the interviewees at lower levels did not report strong restrictions imposed by their higher managers. As the project progressed parties tended to become more focused on increasing its scope of work (and hence, budget):

> *In the design phase, as a subcontractor you don't really have the possibility to focus on that (additional work[2]). You do your job and you try to do it in the best possible way, or as quick or as cheap as possible. In a later phase when [subcontractor] starts building on the basis of our information and our information changes, they can say, I have to do my job twice, this will cost you so much.* (Project manager)
>
> *When we say, this is a deviation, we have come up with this solution and now we want to have it like this because it only fits in the ship like this. (They say:) You are going to pay. That is very shortsighted, but that is how the company responds….* (Project manager)

In this study no confirmation was found in the interviews that project executors were actually instructed in this sense, but this may be due to the sensitivity of the subject. Also the strong focus on collaboration from the start of the project may have led companies to instruct individuals to behave in line with consummate types of behavior. Only when the project progresses further may companies start forgetting about the collaboration focus in this project and individuals may be instructed accordingly in their scope of mandate.

Furthermore, the involvement of higher management changed during the project. As the project overall went well, involvement of higher management decreased. In the beginning of the project the commercial aspects needed to be settled, but as the project progressed the technical aspects became more important. Only when changes in the project have important commercial consequences higher management is expected to step back in, but this has not occurred during the period of observation.

Regarding equality, a possible deterioration of this condition was expected if problems occurred. The client will then be tempted to emphasize the client-contractor roles to put pressure on the contractors. Part of this game might take the form of trying to increase the contractor's shadow of the future. However, no clear indications were found that this happened in the project studies, possibly because there already was a strong shadow of the future, at least for one of the contractors:

> *Also if a project falls short, you have to say, too bad, we have to learn from that for future projects. If we try to get the maximum, we will upset the client and there will be no next time.* (Higher manager)

[2] Additional work and/or services that go beyond the deliverables that are given in the statement of work

Path Dependency

The interviewees indicate that, generally speaking, what a party does early in the project has a strong effect on relationships later on:

> *In the beginning of the project you need to deliver, then you need to deliver the drawings and the engineering and if that goes too slowly the trust is gone.* (Higher manager)

More specific path-dependent developments were found in the relationships between the shipyard and one of the main suppliers ("Supplier A"). This relationship was burdened with remaining disputes from a previous project.

> *We have worked very intensively together to make those contracts. In doing so we have also dealt with some old sores between the parties. We have put a lot of effort in that, and we have succeeded.* (Higher manager).

However, the clean slate soon tarnished again. The shipyard was late in contracting Supplier A, and against expectations, the supplier never caught up with the schedule.

> *We have had a false start [with Supplier A]. We had agreed when they would give us the specifications. Five months later we still didn't have them, six months later they came and they were rubbish. Then a few people, among whom myself, have looked at it and tried to get them right. I have even shifted my holidays to try to catch up with the delay. We were three months behind at that time. But one year later we were still three months behind.* (Higher manager)

As a result the relationship gradually deteriorated. *"Let's start with the worst case, [Supplier A]. That's a shitty firm, excuse me, …"* (Project manager). *"[Supplier A] always knows why we are the ones to blame"* (Higher manager).

In the end the situation was far from the ideal of consummate collaboration:

> *What has deteriorated is the attitude in the project, their willingness to integrate and their tendency to look for extra work. This indicates that their contract is too poor. That they earn too little and that they try with all their might to cut their losses.* (Higher manager).

The collaborative behavior portrayed in the project was path dependent for this specific subcontractor. The above quotes illustrate how one subcontractor that started off with more perfunctory types of behavior was unable to move towards consummate types of behavior. They were unable to break this vicious cycle. Once the collaborative behavior moves towards perfunctory types of collaborative behavior in a project it is very difficult to break this motion over time. The trust is broken and participants perceive and define the interests associated with this party with self-interests.

Also in the observations of the different meetings a decrease in the confidence in the specific subcontractor over time was seen. In the beginning of the project, a few individuals occasionally referred to their negative experiences with the subcontractor in previous projects. Not much attention is given to this behavior by higher management. They express that previous experiences have been put aside and that they start with a clean slate. Further along in the project more individuals from different hierarchical levels express their annoyance with how the subcontractor responds. Towards the end of the study period a majority of the individuals lose their trust in the work of the subcontractor and their behavior towards this subcontractor changes. This example shows how in spite of attempts to start the collaboration in a positive way, early problems led to a vicious cycle of mutual recriminations. Once perfunctory collaboration has started in a project it is difficult to move break this process and move towards consummate collaboration.

CONCLUSIONS

This study in the shipbuilding industry found some traces of how conceptions of interests are socially constructed through discursive processes. The accounts of the respondents showed frequent references to temporal embeddedness and equality of the relationship, and the scope of mandate and co-location of the individual that affect the type of collaborative behavior in an MOP. These conditions are largely in line with characteristics of a productive dialogue as mentioned by Mansbridge et al. (2006). Consummate collaboration is supported by high temporal embeddedness, equality between individuals, a broad scope of mandate, and co-location with individuals of other companies. These conditions lead to constructive dialogue between representatives of the organizations involved in the project, which make it more likely that they will engage in consummate collaboration.

With respect to the dynamics the results indicate that project life cycle effects and path dependencies have an effect on collaborative processes over time. It was observed that during the project life cycle temporal embeddedness in the sense of shared experiences in the focal project became stronger, while no indications of a change in the effect of experiences in previous projects or of expectations with regard to future projects was found. This paper expected the scope of mandate of some representatives of contractors to becomes more limited over time, but found only some indirect evidence for this. In addition, it was discovered that the involvement of higher management decreased in relation to the increased focus on technical aspects of the project. Overall these changes over time affected the collaboration in the project. At lower organizational levels an increase in consummate collaboration was witnessed, while for higher managers consummate

types of collaborative behaviors might decline over time (although no clear evidence for this was found). The project that was followed in this study was unique in the sense that the participating companies had a strong focus on collaboration. This focus resulted in several initiatives that steered the companies more towards consummate type of collaboration. This may have influenced the project life cycles that were observed in this project. Additionally, it means that the focus on collaboration may have had an impact on how the individuals perceived their interests and acted accordingly. Furthermore, a path dependency was observed in which behavior from previous projects or in the beginning of the project strongly affects the relationship with other participants later on in the project. This paper showed an example of a deficient relationship that was established in earlier encounters of the relationship that negatively influenced the relationship and thus behavior in later stages of the project. These types of behavior were not conducive to consummate behavior and once established, were difficult to steer towards consummate types of behavior.

The results confirm that rational choice theories are likely to offer a too restricted view on collaboration in social dilemma situations (Justice, 2006; Monroe, 2001). Consummate collaboration in MOPs that are characterized by social dilemma characteristics seems to be based on social constructions of interests. This seems to be in line with Kollock's (1998) third category of solutions to social dilemmas: strategic solutions that resolve the dilemma by increasing the salience of long-term collaboration. This paper tries to contribute to solving "the mystery" (Ledyard, 1995: 172) of collaboration by linking it to four conditions for discourse conducive to consummate collaboration in the accounts of interest of respondents.

Future research should dig more deeply into the processes of social construction of interests, especially in relation to discourse. So far interests have largely been taken as given, and the possibility to change conceptions of interests ignored as a possible way to change behavior in collaboration. These processes should also be studied both within the life cycle of a project and across projects. Additionally, more insights into the nature of consummate collaboration are needed. What is consummate collaboration in different contexts, and what factors cause it? While this paper identified several factors associated with discourse, there are likely to be more factors that support consummate collaboration.

CHAPTER 5[1]

STRATEGIC MENTAL MAPS IN PROJECTS

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the strategic intent of business managers in the Dutch shipbuilding industry. A mental mapping technique is used to examine the relation between the strategic intent and consummate collaboration. Most companies see collaboration as part of their strategic intent, nevertheless, this paper finds important differences in how concepts related to consummate collaboration are embedded in managers' mental maps. Congruence between goals and time horizons are important elements of how managers view collaboration. Also the dependency of companies on the shipbuilding industry determines a perspective on collaboration with other companies. This paper elucidates the relationship between the strategic intent of companies and collaboration between companies.

[1] This chapter is the result of joint work with Niels Noorderhaven.

INTRODUCTION

In temporary inter-organizational projects multiple companies work together on a temporary project (Jones & Lichtenstein, 2008). For example, in a project in the shipbuilding industry a shipyard, an electro technical company and HVAC company, together with a number of other suppliers, work together to assemble a ship. Essential in these inter-organizational projects is collaboration between the companies (Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2000). These inter-organizational projects contain multiple companies, this paper therefore uses the term multi-organizational projects (MOPs). Although these companies share responsibilities in the assembly they have different interests (Jones & Lichtenstein, 2008). As an insider from the shipbuilding industry describes it: *"The final goal is the same: completing with each other a product that has the best price-quality relation, however, we perceive the means towards that end differently."*

Common problems in these MOPs are additional work and rework (Rooke et al., 2004), but also issues with trust, commitment (Bresnen & Marshall, 2000b, 2000a) and delays are prevalent. These problems may lead to ineffectiveness in the project. The temporality in these project based settings, with milestones and deadlines, puts even more pressure on the individuals in the projects (Jones & Lichtenstein, 2008; Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). From these insights the Dutch shipbuilding industry has formulated the desire to aim for more integrative collaboration in the chain of companies working on a ship. With this desire a program called "Integrative Collaboration" was born to develop better collaboration models for the Dutch shipbuilding industry.

The concept of integrative collaboration can also be found in the bargaining literature. Larsson et al. (1998) discuss integrative and distributive collaboration as part of the division between competition and collaboration in inter-organizational alliances. Walton and McKersie conceptualized the idea of integrative collaboration by examining distributive and integrative types of bargaining (1965). Distributive bargaining focuses on competing for the joint outcome, while integrative bargaining aims for together producing a greater joint outcome. In other words the integrative dimension aims at jointly making an as large as possible pie, while the distributive dimension pertains the way in which the pie is divided among the actors. Similar to these concepts are the concepts of perfunctory and consummate collaboration, as discussed in previous papers in this dissertation. Integrative and distributive collaboration come from the bargaining literature, while perfunctory and consummate collaboration come from organizational economics. In this paper we use the continuum of perfunctory and consummate collaboration.

Pursuing consummate collaboration in an MOP aims to produce a situation where all participating companies can win by satisfying the common interests. With distributive

collaboration the conflicting interests of the companies lead to efforts to secure a greater part for the individual company (Larsson et al., 1998), which typically goes at the expense of all. Aiming for consummate collaboration leads to the most beneficial situation for all companies provided that all companies pursue the common interests.

This paper focuses on the strategy of the companies in MOPs. In an MOP each company has its own strategy when it comes to how they do business. Representatives of the companies come together in a team that needs to collaborate to successfully finish the project. The strategy of the company sets the long term goal of the desired position it wants to establish in the competitive environment (Artto, Martinsuo, Dietrich, & Kujala, 2008b; Hamel & Prahalad, 2005; Porac, Thomas, & Baden-Fuller, 1989). The means to achieve this position are formed and constructed through the people within the company (Chaffee, 1985; Huxham & Vangen, 2005). The company's strategy influences the perception of representatives and determines how they interact collaboratively in the project. The strategy of the company may therefore be assumed to have an impact on the collaboration between individuals and companies within a project. But whether and how the concept of collaboration takes shape in the strategies of companies operating in project-based industries remains unclear, while this will likely have an effect on the possibility of consummate collaboration.

So far scholars have mainly focused on the project strategy concept in which the strategy of the organization that manages the project is discussed (Artto et al., 2008a; Artto et al., 2008b). This paper is interested in the strategies of the companies in an MOP setting. Not much research has examined the perspective of the participating companies' strategy in a project, while collaboration may be affected by the different strategies of the companies. This paper is not so much interested in the formalized strategy of a company (as embodied in a strategic plan), but rather in the worldview underlying the day-to-day strategic actions of the firm. The strategic intent of a company represents the position that the company desires and aims for in the long term (Hamel & Prahalad, 2005). This strategic intent gives an idea of how the manager perceives the company's strategy and how this strategy might guide the change towards consummate collaboration (Huff & Jenkins, 2002). This paper taps into the worldview of the companies focusing on the strategic intent by studying the mental maps of top managers.

Hence this paper is interested in how these mental maps of top managers of companies operating in a project-based industry relate to consummate collaboration, because it is assumed that this will influence collaborative behaviors of the company's representatives in projects.

The research question is therefore:
How do the strategic mental maps of companies working in multi-organizational projects relate to consummate collaboration?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Mental Maps

In order to examine the strategic intent of the different companies this paper uses mental maps. A cognitive map, causal map, or mental model map is an individual's conscious perception of reality (Langfield-Smith, 1992). A mental map consists of concepts, relationships, and statements. A relationship ties two concepts together and a statement describes the relationship between two concepts (Carley & Palmquist, 1992). A mental model deals with two types of believes: "beliefs about the identity of the firm and causal beliefs about what it takes to compete successfully within the environment" (Porac et al., 1989: 399). Both elements of a mental model are important and represented in the strategy of the firm. The identity of the firm is portrayed in the mental map of the strategy as well as the belief of the company how to compete successfully is represented in the strategy.

This paper uses the mental map to tap into the worldview of the strategic intent of the company. Several authors (Calori, Johnson, & Sarnin, 1994; Hambrick & Mason, 1984) argue that the strategy of the company represents the values and cognitive bases of the CEO. A strategy of a company is an abstraction in the mind of managers (Mintzberg, 1987). For researchers mental maps provide a way to acquire insights into the strategic stance towards collaboration, as seen and expressed by a top decision maker. Therefore in this study CEOs of a company were interviewed to examine the strategic intent and its relatedness to collaboration, as reflected in his or her mental map.

Strategic Intent

The strategy of a company can be described as the behavior of the company in the market (Ritter & Gemünden, 2004). The concept of strategy has been defined in different ways referring to different aspects (Mintzberg, 1987). Mintzberg (1987) discusses five different definitions, which include strategy as plan, ploy, pattern, position, and perspective. The first definition of strategy as a plan refers to a course of action to deal with a certain situation. For example in the game theory literature, the plan specifies which choices the player will make in the possible situations he faces. Secondly, the strategy can be of any nature and can thus also be a ploy, a course of action intended to circumvent an opponent or competitor (Mintzberg, 1987). The third definition discusses strategy

as a pattern, a stream of actions. These patterns may be part of an intended plan. However, the patterns can also be unintended. Strategy as a position is the fourth definition discussed by Mintzberg (1987), which sees strategy as a means of locating a company in an environment (Artto et al., 2008b). In this definition, strategy is referred to as the mediating factor between the company and the external context in which the company operates. Lastly, strategy is defined as a perspective. This refers to a shared and collective perspective on how the world works (Mintzberg, 1987).

These definitions have in common that strategy refers to "a set of guidelines that determines decisions into the future" (Mintzberg, 1978: 935). With the use of a strategy in a project a company has the ambition to achieve a desired position in its competitive stakeholder environment (Artto et al., 2008b). A strategy of a company sets guidelines how to deal with future situations in order to fulfill a certain goal.

As said before this paper is not interested in the formal strategic plan of a company, it is interested in the worldview of managers responsible for the long term goals and strategic direction of the company. The strategic intent of a company expresses the desired position that the company wants to achieve. The means to achieve that goal are flexible and not necessarily defined in the strategic intent. The aim of the strategic intent is to define the long term goal that remains stable over time (Hamel & Prahalad, 2005). Therefore the concept of strategic intent fits well with the mental map in which the top represents the ultimate goal of the company.

Strategy in Projects

In the context of project-based organizations several papers discuss the strategy of an individual project (Artto et al., 2008a). These papers discuss the strategy of the project organization that manages the project (Artto et al., 2008a; Artto et al., 2008b). These scholars use a project perspective as the level of analysis and focus on the situation where there is one project organization that determines the strategy of the project and the associated organizations in the project follow this strategy. In these papers the goals of the project organization are assumed to be aligned with the parent organization's strategy. This paper focuses on the context in which the different companies in a project each have their own strategy. Limited research has looked into the strategies of the different companies that are part of one project. Therefore this paper wants to take on a different level of analysis, namely that of the company participating in a project. This paper is interested in the strategies of the different independent companies that work together in a project.

In a project each company is represented by individuals that interact on the project level with representatives of the other companies. Previous research showed that these representatives of the

participating companies are instructed from their own company on how to act in the project (Adams, 1976; Leufkens & Noorderhaven, 2011). A company can give formal instructions, but might also have informal expectations as to the behavior of a representative in the project (Ring & Van de Ven, 1994). These instructions and expectations might be concerned with the main objectives of the company in a project. For example, should an individual be flexible towards the client in their work or should it be strict in terms of doing extra work without money compensation?

The strategies and the instructions that follow from the strategic intent of a company can have an impact on how the individuals representing their companies collaborate (Chaffee, 1985). How this collaboration evolves and the extent to which it approaches the ideal of "consummate collaboration" may be expected to be influenced by various factors. Some of these will pertain to characteristics of the focal project (Artto et al., 2008a) or the environment in which the project is executed (Bresnen & Marshall, 2000c). While acknowledging the importance of these influences, this paper focuses on a factor that has been neglected in previous studies, viz., the strategic intent of the collaborating organizations. This topic is of relevance to both theory and practice in the field of project management. Firstly, a number of important industries are organized on the basis of interorganizational projects, such as the construction and film industry. From previous work it has been seen that the dynamics for companies are different when working in projects (Jones & Lichtenstein, 2008; Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). Additionally, more and more companies that initiate internal change do this in a project-based setting (Brady & Davies, 2004).

Collaboration

Collaboration is essential in project-based settings due to the interdependence between the companies working in a project. In a multi-organizational project there are multiple companies that together have to deliver a project. For each project the composition of the group of participating firms may be different, which means that for every project companies have to put effort in ensuring effective collaboration.

Holweg et al. (Holweg, Disney, Holmström, & Småros, 2005) discuss factors that influence the effectiveness of supply chain collaboration. They argue that the effectiveness of collaboration depends firstly on the level to which external supply chain collaboration is integrated with internal production processes. The second factor affecting the effectiveness is the level to which the efforts are made to align/synchronize the supply chain (Holweg et al., 2005). Supply chain collaboration has in common with project collaboration that different disciplines interact. However, unlike shipbuilding projects supply chain collaborations are not necessarily characterized by limited

duration. Summing up what Holweg et al. (2005) claim to be important in supply chain collaboration is the match between the "independent" units and the supply chain. For project collaboration this would mean that a match between the companies and project is needed in order to achieve effective collaboration. This paper assumes that the strategic intent of the companies affects the collaboration in the project. The strategy of an individual company might affect the collaboration with other companies as well as the collaboration within a project. A match or common aspects of the strategic intent of the different companies could for instance be helpful in achieving consummate collaboration.

DATA AND METHODS

Research Setting

The setting of this paper is the Dutch shipbuilding industry. In this industry an initiative has started four years ago with the aim to steer the industry towards more integrative collaboration. In fact, the discussion of this concept earlier in the paper was based on the ideas developed by the proponents of this initiative. The goal of the initiative "Integrative Collaboration" is to strengthen the competitiveness of the Dutch shipbuilding industry by developing better collaboration models and instruments. Fifteen companies took place in the advisory board to investigate initiatives that facilitate integrative collaboration. Besides the participation in the advisory board these companies provided financial means and their participation to research and experimental settings to explore possible solutions. These companies include several shipyards and subcontractors in different specializations. The shipyards fulfill the role of the main contractors in the shipbuilding industry and the subcontractors are hired by the shipyard.

Data Collection

In this study all companies involved in the "Integrative Collaboration" program were approached. From the fifteen companies twelve agreed to participate. Due to the large size of some companies with multiple locations, this paper focused on the business units of these companies. This meant that with some companies, top managers of several business units within one company were interviewed. The level of analysis was the individual level. The individuals interviewed were representative of their company. Fourteen loosely structured interviews with individuals from twelve different companies were done. The individuals that have the authority to make strategic decisions for the whole company or a quasi-independent part of it were interviewed, such as CEOs or managing directors, or in the case of the shipyards top managers of business units. From these

fourteen interviews, five managers are from business units from shipyards and nine come from subcontractor business units. The method of interviewing these top managers was chosen in line with previous research (Calori et al., 1994; Fiol & Huff, 1992). These authors also interviewed CEOs to tap into their perspectives on different issues.

This paper is interested in the strategy of the different business units. More specifically, how the strategic intent of the business units relates to collaboration. The interviews focused on the strategic intent of the top manager of the business unit in the shipbuilding industry. The main questions were concerned with the ultimate goals of the business unit, the means to achieve this goal but also a prospective of the strategic intent of the business unit. In addition, questions were asked about the strategy in relation to collaboration with both the client and the subcontractors. The interview protocol is included in Appendix I.

During the interviews a mental map was drawn that portrayed the strategic intent of the business unit. At the top of the mental map are the goals of the companies. One level below is the strategic directions of the mental map, which are long term directions to achieve the ultimate goal at the top of the mental map. At the bottom of the map are options, or the means that drive the directions to reach the goal (Ackermann, Eden, & Cropper, 1992; Eden & Ackermann, 1998). Depending on the account given by the interviewee, there may also be more than three levels. Almost all interviews were done with two interviewers, where one interviewer drew the mental map and the other focused on the questions. The interviews were recorded. After all the interviews were finished, the interviews were listed to again to see if the mental maps were complete and where needed the concepts or relationships were adapted.

Analyses

The analysis started at the top of the mental maps. The different mental maps were compared by going top down through the mental maps. Important in the comparison was the content of these maps (Langfield-Smith & Wirth, 1992). Firstly, the focus was on the ultimate long term goals, which represents where the strategic intent starts (Eden & Ackermann, 1998). Comparing the mental maps the differences in ultimate goals between the maps were indicated. Secondly, the concepts in the map that indicated a relationship with collaboration were searched for. Collaboration is important in the analysis, especially how it is represented in the strategic intent of the companies, but also where is it positioned in the mental map. Therefore after the first examination of the collaboration concepts the positioning of the collaboration concepts was examined more closely. It was important to know how central these collaboration concepts were located in the mental maps

(Eden & Ackermann, 1998). With the use of the network analysis program UCINET (Borgatti, Everett, & Freeman, 2002) the centrality of the collaboration concepts was investigated. In addition, the Visone network visualization software was used to explore the status of our collaboration concepts in the mental maps (Brandes & Wagner, 2004).

In order to examine the centrality of the collaboration concepts different centrality measures were used. Degree centrality represents the number of relations of a concept. The mental maps consist of directed ties. This means that the relationship between two concepts goes in one direction, where one concept is influenced by another concept. In the mental maps this is represented by the means at the bottom of the mental map that affect the strategic direction and ultimate goals at the top of the map. In the situation of directed ties, indegree and outdegree centrality can be distinguished. Indegree and outdegree centrality measure the number of incoming and outgoing relations respectively. The normalized indegree centrality is used, which is a percentage of the degrees in a network (Hanneman & Riddle, 2005), or in this situation the mental map. A high degree of indegree centrality of a concept in the mental map would mean that the collaboration concept is affected by many other parts in the strategic intent of the business unit.

In addition, the status of the concept is looked at (Katz, 1953). The status index assigns each concept a status score, which is calculated by the weighted average of the status scores of the other concepts leading towards the concept in question. The contribution of each concept leading to the concept in question is weighted by the inverse of its outdegree. The fewer outdegree relations a concept has the more weight each of them receives. The status is an appropriate measure for this paper because of the directed ties in this paper in order to incorporate the hierarchical structure of the concepts in the mental map. This paper looks at the standardized status to get an idea of the status in comparison to the whole mental map. A high status value for a collaboration concept means that the collaboration concept is important in the mental map, both with respect to the number of relationships and hierarchically.

Although a mental map with concepts is not the same as a social network consisting of actors this paper does believe that it can use these measures to get an idea of the prominence of the collaboration concepts in relation to the mental map. Still it has to be kept in mind that in a social network information flows between the actors, while in a strategic intent mental map there is no such thing as information or actors that have relationships. A limitation of the indegree centrality measure is that there is no difference in importance between the concepts in the mental map, only the number of relations count. Nevertheless, this paper uses the indegree centrality combined with the status measures as indication of how central the collaboration concepts are in the strategic

intent. It is believed it indicates the prominence of the collaboration concepts in the strategic intent for a business unit.

Thirdly, the content of the collaboration concepts was more thoroughly examined by comparing these on the basis of their strength. The description of the type of collaboration relationship gives a better idea on how the business units perceive collaboration in their strategic intent.

The last part that was looked into was the role of collaboration with the client in the strategic intent of the business units. After the analysis of the mental maps some characteristics of the companies in relationship with the mental maps were taken into account. The information about these company characteristics comes from company websites, annual report, but also from the interviews. This paper tries to find patterns that explain connections between the company characteristics and parts of the strategic intent in the mental maps. Therefore the unit of analysis is at the company level. With the use of this information this paper tries to explain where the strategic intent and the position of collaboration in a mental map come from.

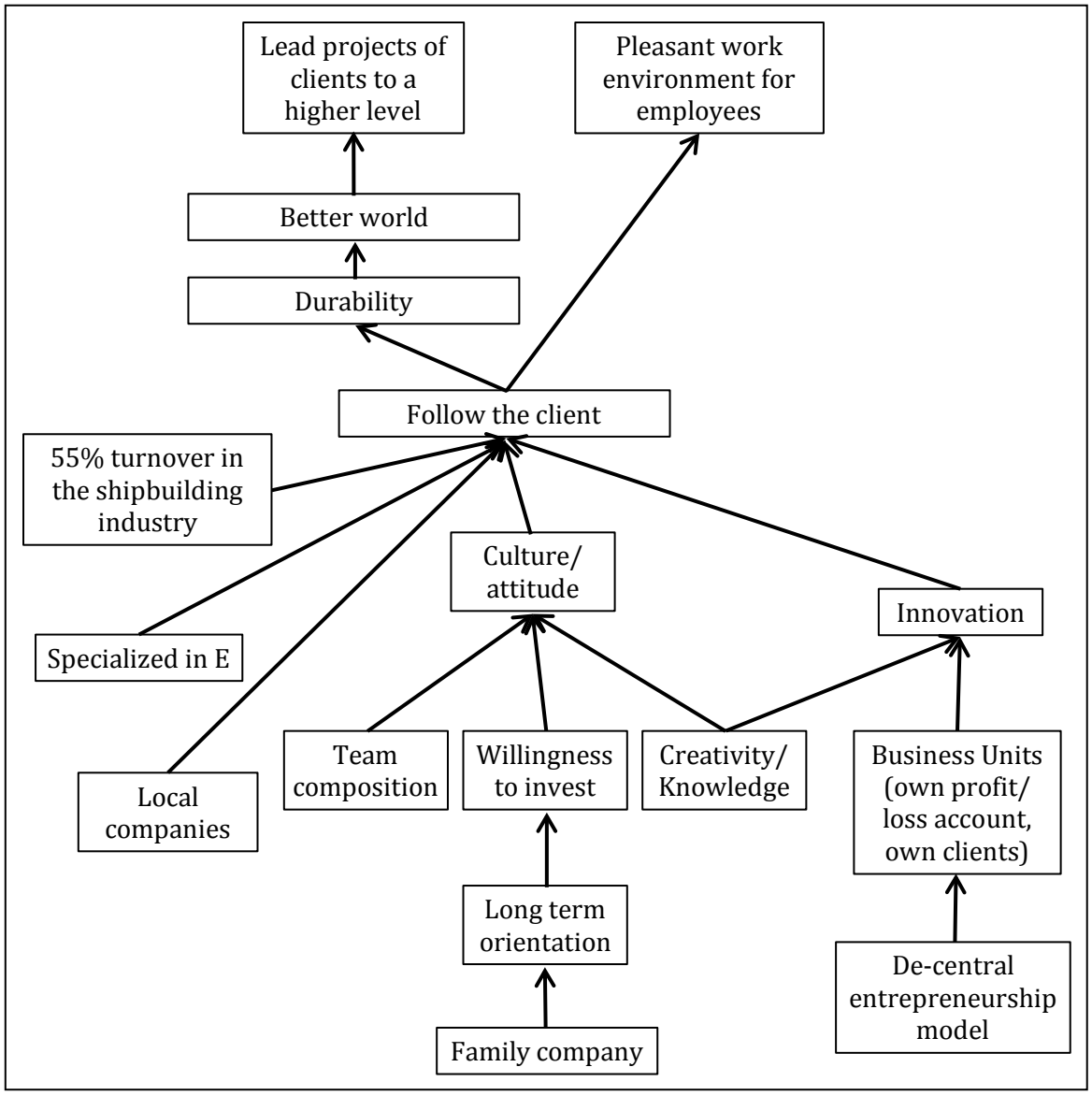
FINDINGS

In the findings the focus is firstly on the top of the mental map, i.e., the ultimate goal of the company and thereafter on how collaboration is referred to in the mental maps. The content of the collaboration element is examined, the positioning of collaboration in the mental map (what contributes to collaboration and to what does collaboration lead), and the prominence of collaboration in the mental map. Figure 5.1 is an illustration of one of the mental maps of the respondents.

Ultimate Goals

In the first step the top of the mental maps of the fourteen business units, which represents the ultimate goal or raison d'être of the company, is looked at. There are three types of main goals in the mental maps of the business units. These goals are continuity, return and growth. Almost half of the respondents indicate that their business unit aims for continuity. In addition to the five managers that explicitly mention continuity there is one business unit (#12) that is also categorized in the continuity goal category (see Table 5.1). Due to the lack of any monetary return goal in addition to their long term focus it is assumed that this business unit aims for continuity. There is also one business unit (#9) that has both a continuity and a return goal at the top of the mental map. The continuity indicates their focus on the long term, even though they have shareholders that demand a certain return.

FIGURE 5.1
An Example of a Mental Map



Of the other eight business units, there are an additional three units that have a financial return goal, indicated by their "make a profit" or "comply with return value demands" goals. The respondents of the remaining five business units say that they strive for growth, either by setting a certain monetary target or by defining their ultimate goal as "become the largest […] in the world". There are a few business unit managers that bring up a different goal in addition to the aforementioned goals. There are several companies that strive for providing a pleasant environment for their employees as part of their ultimate goals.

TABLE 5.1
Ultimate Goal Quotes

	Quote	Ultimate Goal
#1	We want to keep on building (...)	Continuity
#2	I want to get this company to a turnover of (...) by unburdening the client.	Growth
	We want to put this company on the map, internationally, by supporting the Dutch gas and maritime industry in becoming successful.	Support Dutch maritime industry
#3	Our mission is to sell, engineer and build (...) worldwide.	Growth
#4	We are a family company, which needs profit to support our continuity goal. We are not here for the short team, we are here for the very long term.	Continuity
#5	As a company with shareholders our business units need to aim for a certain level of return.	Return value demand
#6	"I want to become the largest (...) in the world", that is his ambition. Our goal is to become twice the size as we are now within three years.	Growth
#7	In a certain number of focus countries we want to get a certain market share. In other countries we don't want to get any market share because our mother company needs to meet certain demands.	Growth
#8	Our shareholders have a growth and return demand, so it is bipartite that we want to fulfill that condition.	Growth & Return value demand
#9	We offer continuity to our employees.	Continuity
	We want to offer a pleasant and healthy work environment for a big number of people.	A pleasant work environment
	(...) is a corporation and those people have to make a profit, but they do look at the long term. If we don't do so well a year, they look at several years.	Return value demand
#10	We have a lot of attention for internationalization, we want to work more international. We just opened our office in (...) in order to serve the local market.	Growth
	Innovation is a spearhead, we want to be innovative, we have our own companies for that.	Internationalization
	We have a lot of attention for growth, we want to grow.	Innovation
	Collaboration internally and externally. What you see is that we collaborate more with each other in the supply chain, but also towards our clients, upstream.	Collaboration
#11	This is a profit company, I want to generate money.	Return value demand
#12	We want to play a certain role, we want to get the project of our client to a higher level and with that the client itself. [...]. We want to contribute to a better world.	Higher quality
	We want to be an inspiring environment for our employees. [...] That people come to work with joy.	A pleasant work environment
#13	We are a family company. Family companies aim for continuity.	Continuity
	We are like: as long as it is a pleasant place to work, but also how we acquire our work and the relationship with our clients.	A pleasant work environment
#14	The biggest target is the continuity of the company, that is what I prioritize on, that is the first strategic goal we have.	Continuity

The three business units that put 'a pleasant work environment' goal at the top of their mental map are all companies that also aim for continuity. Some other goals that are mentioned by the different managers are: "innovation" and "bring the quality of the projects of the client to a higher level". Table 5.1 gives an overview of all the ultimate goals that were mentioned by the respondents. Also the quotes and the associated categorization of continuity, return value demand and growth are represented in Table 5.1.

Collaboration

In order to get an idea of how the strategic intent of the fourteen business units relates to consummate collaboration, this paper looks how collaboration is represented in the mental maps. First, how the managers describe the elements related to collaboration is compared, i.e., the meaning of collaboration in the mental map. Table 5.2 represents the quotes and associated labels in the mental maps that relate to collaboration.

Thirteen out of the fourteen business units include collaboration in their mental maps. There is one business unit that does not mention collaboration with other companies as a part of their strategic intent. This business unit (#1) is not included in Table 5.2. This business unit for example mentions that it wants to be able to shift business between companies in order to lower the cost price.

The references towards collaboration differ between the business units. The managers of the thirteen business units that do include collaboration in their mental map describe collaboration in relation to different stakeholders. They talk about relationships with clients, with subcontractors or with other companies at the same level of the supply chain. Ten mental maps incorporate collaboration with the client in their strategic intent. Four managers mention collaboration with their subcontractors. Only one mental map includes the relationship with companies at the same level of the supply chain: "tune in with other disciplines" (#8). Most business unit managers mention several collaborative elements referring to collaboration with different stakeholders. For example, they have goals striving for "strategic partnerships with contractors" as well as taking into account "the interests of the client" in their map. There are two mental maps in which only one reference to collaboration is made (#9 and #13). These mental maps focus on collaboration with the client.

TABLE 5.2
Collaboration Quotes

	Quotes	Collaboration label in mental map
#2	I want a partnership that goes deeper, where you say we have a certain level of costs or a certain time period and that you work on that together, in that way we can strengthen our competitiveness.	Strengthen competitiveness together with client
	We aim for a partnership with our client. [...]. In the customer intimacy strategy that we strive for, you try to keep your client close, but you don't want to suffocate them, the love has to come from both sides.	Partnership with client
	We are doing this [following the client] pro-actively. Client A has not asked us to buy an office in China. Even so, they do welcome us. [...] You see that it works.	Follow the client
	Again, the unburdening, that is what we use the coming 5 years, that is where we are headed. Delivering one complete solution for the client, that is our advantage over other companies.	Unburden the client
	Our client has to set the rules of the game, that is not up to me.	Loyalty from the client
#3	Aspects in our vision are "organized customer lead tracking" and "high quality", we incorporate the interests of our client.	Interests of the client
	Strategic partnering with subcontractors means that you strengthen each others network and together secure an order, or make long-term multimarket agreements.	Strategic partnerships with contractors
	Our clients often have the demand that we have to be present locally.	Be present locally
	What we ask our subcontractors is that they come along in our traveling circus. It has to be like that, if they cannot or don't want to, we are not made for each other in the long term.	Contractors accompany us abroad
#4	We want to a be a partner for our client.	Partnership with client
	We are only going abroad to follow our client.	Follow the client
#5	That is something we strategically aim for, ship-owner relation management. What we do is get specified and give value to the end user.	Ship-owner relation management
	We aim to optimize our customer processes. Of course we focus on the processes that are present in the ship and how these can be optimized.	Optimize customer processes
	[...] if you make your value clear to the person responsible for the operations of the ship, you can exploit that advantage. That is our strategy to, via the relationship we have with the end user, get a foot in the door.	Become preferred supplier
#6	If you have a target of chain optimization, the partners come along with that and you talk openly with them about your strategic targets for the future.	Have top partners as contractors
	We need a partner with the same mentality who says: I have a knowledge center, a mother company in the Netherlands, but I want a worldwide global network of companies focusing on where the business is right now, and build new companies in Asia.	Contractors accompany us abroad

TABLE 5.2 CONTINUED
Collaboration Quotes

	Quotes	Collaboration label in mental map
#7	We have made that client big seen from our perspective, so I also want to maintain that client.	Maintain clients
	We are strong in the area of customer intimacy. We think along with the client. [...]. Our client asks a lot from us, but we also deliver a lot. That means that sometimes we, with our knowledge, we are sitting shoulder-to-shoulder at the drawing table with them, that is really integrative collaboration.	Customer intimacy
	We have to follow our client, because I want to keep on serving our client.	Be locally present
#8	We want to control the risk, for the client but mostly for ourselves.	Control risk for clients
	I asked (...) to come to us to discuss their participation in risk sharing. [...] Active attention to quality, that is what they wanted, they were waiting for that as well.	Partnership with contractors
	We want to deliver the most complete package therefore we have to tune in with the other disciplines.	Tune in with other disciplines
	For the managers it is important that they have a conception of the process of the client.	Conception of process of the client
#9	We "go along on the carrier". So if there is a ship being build here and the copies are being build in China or Brazil, we go along with the client.	Internationalize "on the carrier" of the client
#10	Collaboration internally and externally. What you see is that we collaborate more with each other in the supply chain, but also towards our clients, upstream.	Collaboration with subcontractor and client
#11	We want our client to be satisfied with the performance that we deliver. [...] we do this to keep the client central.	Client
	Everything is oriented at the unburdening of the client, that is our central statement. This refers to our internal clients as well as our external client.	Unburden the client
#12	We have the strategy to follow the client, a big client with whom we have a long term connection or that we find of interest.	Follow the client
#13	We went abroad and then got a lot of work from (...). Following the client is not what we intended, but in practice that is what it comes down to.	Follow the client abroad
#14	We are a company that knows long term relationships. With (...) we already do business since 1971, we have 4 or 5 main subcontractors. [...] in that way we try to build a relationship.	Long term relationships with contractors
	He wants European contractors to deliver a certain level of service abroad, we of course jumped in on that. We try to conquer a position, we go with the client abroad.	Go with the client abroad

Positioning of the Collaborative Element

Secondly, a closer look is given at the positioning of the collaboration elements in the mental maps. This paper started by looking at how central the collaborative element is positioned in the mental map by examining the indegree centrality and status measure. After that the level at which the collaboration element is positioned in the mental map is examined, relative to the other elements.

There are seven mental maps in which the collaboration element(s) has the most central position in the strategic intent. For these seven maps the indegree centrality scores as well as their status scores are either the highest or they place second in comparison to the other concepts. Table 5.3 gives an overview of the indegree centrality and status measures per collaboration element. Strikingly, almost all of these central collaboration concepts refer to collaboration with the client. This means that the central collaboration elements in the strategic intent are concerned with clients and not so much with subcontractors. This might indicate that client relationships are more important for companies than a relationship with the subcontractor. These business units for example put “optimize customer processes”, “unburden the client” or “follow the client” central in their mental map. Comparing the indegree centrality and status measures both agree on the most central factor in the mental map. The differences between the measures can be seen with the positioning of the other concepts. The indegree centrality measure does not take the level in the mental map at which the elements are positioned into account. In the situation of the status measure the hierarchical level at which the element is positioned does matter. For example for business unit #5 in Table 5.3 the values of the indegree centrality and status measure differ for the item “become preferred supplier”. This concept is ranked very high in the mental map, this is represented in the higher status score of “become preferred supplier”. Due to the high position of this concept this item is prominent in the strategic intent of the business unit. Within the seven business units there is not much difference in the positioning of collaboration in the maps when comparing the shipyards to the subcontractors. Both position the client collaboration centrally in their strategic intent.

The remaining six mental maps position the relationships with subcontractors and clients at the periphery of the map, meaning that these elements are not influenced by many other elements and/or they do not drive the important strategic directions. Therefore, in these maps collaboration-related elements do not have a big impact on the ultimate goals.

Looking at the level at which the collaboration elements are positioned the elements are either located at the level of strategic directions or at the level of an option, at the bottom of the mental map. The relationship with clients can be positioned at all levels, but the relationship with

subcontractors is always located at the lowest level in the mental map, as is shown with the low indegree and status measures for these collaboration concepts. The four out of the five managers who mention their relationship with their subcontractors position this element at the level of an option, as a means for their strategic directions and ultimate goals. Only one business unit (#10) puts collaboration with the subcontractor as an ultimate goal.

TABLE 5.3
Indegree and Status Measures

		NrmInDegree	Mean	Status	
#2	Strengthen competitiveness together with client	6,67	8,33	5,40	
	Partnership with client	6,67		7,13	
	Follow the client	6,67		5,42	
	Unburden the client	20,00		13,97	NR 1
	Loyalty from the client	6,67		5,42	
#3	Interests of the client	23,07	8,79	21,95	NR 2
	Strategic partnerships with contractors	7,69		3,66	
	Be present locally	23,07		10,98	
	Contractors accompany us abroad	0,00		0,00	
#4	Partnership with client	12,50	6,62	7,68	
	Follow the client	0,00		0,00	
#5	Ship-owner relation management	27,27	8,33	25,97	NR 1
	Optimize customer processes	27,27		20,78	NR 1
	Become preferred supplier	9,09		18,18	
#6	Have top partners as contractors	0,00	7,50	0,00	
	Contractors accompany us abroad	6,70		3,61	
#7	Maintain clients	15,38	8,79	12,95	NR 2
	Customer intimacy	15,38		10,76	NR 2
	Be present locally	7,69		8,35	
#8	Control risk for clients	8,33	8,33	6,12	
	Partnership with contractors	0,00		0,00	
	Tune in with other disciplines	8,33		8,15	
	Conception of process of the client	8,33		6,12	
#9	Internationalize "on the carrier" of the client	0,00	7,69	0,00	
#10	Collaboration with subcontractor and client	22,22	12,22	33,86	NR 2
#11	Client	40,00	10,91	36,48	NR 1
	Unburden the client	20,00		16,22	NR 2
#12	Follow the client	31,25	6.25	26,18	NR 1
#13	Follow the client abroad	10,00	10,91	5,71	
#14	Long term relationships with contractors	0,00	10,91	0,00	
	Go with the client abroad	0,00		0,00	

Strength of the Collaborative Element

In addition to the positioning of the collaboration element also the strength of the collaborative element indicated in the mental map is important to consider. For assessing the strength of the collaborative relationship the concepts that are used are examined to see whether these concepts hint at a stronger or a weaker type of collaborative relationship.

It is assumed that "strategic partnership" indicates a different type of relationship than "following the client". Strategic partnerships are a form of two sided or bidirectional collaboration, in which both parties agree on a form of collaboration with each other. This type of collaboration does not necessarily exist when business managers refer to "following clients". In these situations a relationship exists, however, the collaboration relationship is unidirectionally initiated by the business unit, without necessarily including a collaborative relationship from the side of their client. A strategic partnership also indicates a stronger form of collaboration than "customer intimacy" or "optimize customer processes". These two collaborative elements again appear to be stronger than simply "following the client".

There are six business units that discuss (strategic) partnerships with other companies, described as "strategic partnerships", "top partners" or "long term relationships". Four of these partnerships are with subcontractors and two include a partnership with a client. The two business units that mention a partnership with the client are both contractors. The shipyards thus do not consider partnerships with their clients. Even though the partnerships indicate a strong type of relationship these concepts are not centrally located in the mental maps. These partnership elements all have low centrality measures. Interestingly, the four partnerships with contractor elements have the lowest centrality measures. Three out of the four "partnerships with contractor" elements have a centrality measure of 0 (#6, #8 and #14) as depicted in Table 5.3. The fourth collaboration element that discusses a partnership with a subcontractor has a very low status measure (3,66). This indicates that this collaboration element is not centrally located and also positioned at a low level in the mental map. It appears that these business units prefer long term relationships over more market type of relationships as is indicated by the term "partnership". However, these collaboration elements are not essential in their strategic intent as the centrality measures indicate. The four business units that mention contractor partnerships are both shipyards and contractors.

The remaining seven business units bring up their relationship with the client or the subcontractor during the interviews, but do not see this as a partnership. In these situations managers for example mention "following the client", "unburden the client" or "optimize customer

processes". The focus of these seven business units is mainly of collaboration with the client. A relationship with the contractor that is not characterized as a partnership is only mentioned in one mental map (#10). Collaboration with contractors thus mainly takes place in the shape of a partnership in the strategic intent. Other types of relationships with contractors are barely mentioned in the strategic intent of the business units.

There are seven business units that discuss "following the client" as an important aspect in their strategic intent. Following the client appears to us to be a weak collaborative relationship with the client. Most of the business units that follow their client are contractors. Only one of the business units claims to follow the client, this is a shipyard.

Client Collaboration

Twelve out of the fourteen business units mention collaboration with their client in their mental map. This client collaboration appears to be important for many business managers. Therefore, a closer look is taken at the position of collaboration with the client in the mental maps. The client collaboration relationships also differ in their strength. The differences of how the relationship with the client is described are looked at by examining their positioning and the strength of the relationship. There are two business units that see their client as not taking any part in their strategy (#1 and #6), which portrays the weakest or nonexistent form of collaboration with the client. One level up we see three business units that see collaboration with their client as part of their strategy (9, #13 and #14). However, the position of the client collaboration in the strategy is of small importance. The measures for centrality for these business units are quite low. These companies indicate that they "follow the client" (e.g. shipyard) to locations abroad and see this relationship as a side driver for their main goal. Another level up there are five business units that find their client relationship more important by describing it as a central element or referring to a partnership, but without a central position (#3, #4, #8 and #10). This type of client collaboration is stronger than in the previous levels in which the client relationship was important but not as centrally located. The strongest collaborative relationship with their client is indicated by the "(strategic) partnership with clients" or "customer intimacy" and putting this element at a central position in the mental map. There is not much difference between the shipyards and the contractors in their perspective on client collaboration.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Interorganizational collaboration is essential in the Dutch shipbuilding industry in order to create a competitive advantage to compete with other shipbuilding companies abroad (Jap, 1999). This paper focuses on consummate collaboration in MOPs. Important in order to achieve consummate collaboration is the focus on common interests of the parties involved in a project (Larsson et al., 1998). One factor that previous research indicates as important to support strategic collaboration is congruence in goals (Jap, 1999). Goal congruence between different companies, both contractors and shipyards, steers towards the common interests of these companies. In order to examine the goal congruence between the different business units and the relation to collaboration we consider the ownership structure of the companies. Ownership structure was often mentioned by the business managers as the explanation for their ultimate goals.

Ownership Structure of the Company

Ownership structures range from family owned companies to companies that are listed on the stock exchange. The companies that aim for continuity as their ultimate goal, are all family owned companies or limited liability companies. When looking at the six companies that aim for continuity they mostly use partnerships as collaborative relationships. Their long term focus in their partnership type of relationships is consistent with their long term continuity goal (Ahola, Laitinen, Kujala, & Wikström, 2008; Hunt et al., 2010). They aim for long term partnerships with their clients as well as with their subcontractors. Literature on family ownership confirms that these types of businesses do not tend to aim for growth and due to limited resources often have partnership or long term relationships (Astrachan, 2010; Fernández & Nieto, 2005). There are both shipyards and contractors that have this long term focus on continuity and partnerships. From the interviews it appears that most contractors often collaborate with the shipyards that have the same long term aim. The goal congruence between these shipyards and contractors makes that there seems to be a fit between these companies.

The business units with growth and return value demand goals may have different time horizons than the business units that aim for continuity (Lanzara, 1998). Differences between strategic intents in time horizons would make it more difficult to pursue the common interests. Nevertheless, we see in the strategic intent of these more short-term oriented business units that they still see partnerships as part of their strategy. Again if there is congruence between both the goal as well as the type of relationship that is aimed for, shipyards and contractors may collaborate well together.

The strength of relationship that is aimed for is decisive for consummate collaboration, and not the goal the business unit strives for.

Looking into the collaboration aspect in the strategic intents, thirteen out of the fourteen business units see collaboration as part of their strategic intent. Only one manager does not include any element that relates to collaboration in the strategic intent. Most companies thus value collaboration in their strategy in the shipbuilding industry. Of the thirteen mental maps that include collaboration, seven put collaboration at a central position in their maps. Besides the fact that these companies see collaboration as a part in their strategic intent, their collaborative element also has a central location and thus influence on the ultimate strategic goal of the company. Half of the business units (seven) that were interviewed thus see collaboration as an essential element in their strategic intent. These central collaboration elements are mainly focused on collaboration with the client, where both the contractors as the shipyards find client collaboration most important. Twelve of the fourteen business managers see collaboration with the client as part of their strategic intent.

There is, however, variation in the strength of the relationship. Some managers talk about "strategic partnerships" while others talk about "insight into the process of the client". In total there are six out of the twelve business unit managers that discuss strategic partnerships, which points towards a strong collaborative relationship. However, the centrality measures of these "partnership" elements are very low. In addition, the majority of the partnerships are with contractors, and not with clients.

Even though most of the business units see collaboration as an important aspect of their strategic intent, it does not necessarily means all collaborate together effectively. The need for the program "Integrative Collaboration" in the Dutch shipbuilding industry illustrates that. Besides the goal congruence in line with the strive for common interests also the dependency of the companies on the shipbuilding industry affects the interests of the company.

Dependency of the Company

Another company characteristic that determines part of its strategic intent is the dependency of the company on the shipbuilding industry. There is a clear distinction between contractors and shipyards with respect to dependency. Shipyards firstly manage the assembly of the ship and therefore the contractors are always dependent on the shipyard. Secondly, shipyards operate in the shipbuilding industry at all times. Their collaboration is thus not influenced by the dependency on the industry. However, the contractors are much affected by this dependency.

There are two types of interdependence in the shipbuilding industry that are of importance for the collaboration strategies of companies that were mentioned during the interviews. Firstly, the interdependence between companies is important for collaboration issues. There are companies that are characterized as component suppliers as they supply standard components to the shipyard. There are also companies that typify as system suppliers. They have to integrate different components (e.g., pertaining to the electrical or the HVAC system) because they have been contracted to provide the entire system. There are also applicators, such as conservation applicators, which are also dependent in their operations on other companies. They can start with their tasks after others have finished theirs. Hobday et al. (Hobday, Davies, & Prencipe, 2005) discuss these interdependencies as phases in a system integration process. They make the point that system integration is becoming a strategic business capability, important for collaboration in complex products and systems such as the shipbuilding industry.

System suppliers and applicators are more interdependent as they are dependent on other business units to complete their task. More interdependency means that collaboration is more important, but also that there are more parties involved, which makes it more difficult to make collaboration successful.

The second type of interdependence relates to the dependence of the company on the shipbuilding industry by specific investments (Bensaou, 1999). There are contractors for whom 60% or more of turnover comes out of the shipbuilding industry, while other contractors have only 20% or less of their turnover from this industry. The contractors that are dependent on the shipbuilding industry are more inclined to put effort in the collaboration within a project and their strategy accordingly. Losses due to overtime caused by ineffective collaboration are crucial to these companies.

In the results many contractors that followed their clients were seen. These were seen as a weak collaborative form of relationship. Nevertheless, most contractors who follow their clients are highly dependent on the shipbuilding industry. Following the client might indicate a weak type of collaborative relationship, it shows full commitment from the contractor side to their clients. During the interviews it appeared that the contractors that followed their client do expect commitment from the shipyard in return. This means that following the client is an important aspect in consummate collaboration. It is in the interests of both contractor and shipyard that both commit to a relationship where the contractor goes abroad with the shipyard. The shipyards that do appreciate this aspect of collaboration receive full commitment from the contractors.

In addition, most of these highly dependent companies have a long term focus in their strategic intent with their focus on continuity. Following the client is thus seen as a long term commitment in line with a long term time horizon.

All in all, there should be a fit between the ultimate goals of the strategic intent of the business units. The time horizon plays an essential role in the goal congruence as well as the type of relationships that business units aim for. The dependency of the company on the shipbuilding industry determines the importance of collaboration and consequently the fit between contractor and shipyard. Shipbuilding-independent companies are willing to collaborate with shipyards, which may have diverging goals and time horizons, while shipbuilding-dependent companies have a stronger focus on long term commitment in their collaboration. Strategic mental map thus show essential distinctions between different ways in which firms view collaboration. More specifically, these maps indicate the possibility of realizing consummate collaboration in the shipbuilding industry, as they characterize the types of collaboration relationship that the companies strive for.

This study looked at strategic intentions as reflected in mental maps, however on the basis of the data it cannot be ascertained that different maps are also associated with different collaborative behaviors. We could only rely on the interviews and perceptions of the business managers about the collaborative relationship with other companies. To complement this paper it would be interesting to investigate the actual effect of (combinations of) strategic intents on collaborative relationships and project outcomes. In addition, the study took place in the shipbuilding industry and it would be interesting to see if the mental maps of decision makers from other industries based on MOPs are comparable. The shipbuilding industry is known to be strongly rooted in tradition, so maybe the types of relationships we found are characteristics for this industry.

Another aspect that came to the fore in our research is the concept of “shadow of the past” in relation to the strategic intent and subsequently the collaborative relationship. Some business managers adapted their collaboration with clients and contractors to experiences from the past. This might give an alternative explanation for certain types of strategic intents. According to some interviewees, negative experiences in the past with certain partners made their companies change their collaborative behavior. This is especially important for companies highly dependent on the shipbuilding industry. It might be worthwhile to examine the effect of these experiences on the strategy of a company.

CHAPTER 6

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This dissertation explores the social construction of interests and strategies by individuals in the setting of inter-organizational projects. These interests and strategies influence the collaboration process in the project. Contributions from this investigation pertain to the theoretical, empirical and managerial fields.

In this dissertation I have tried to answer the question how social construction processes of interests of individuals and strategies of companies in inter-organizational projects relate to collaboration. Social construction processes of interests and strategies of companies influence the collaboration in an MOP. Essential in both the social construction processes and the strategies of companies in MOPs is the aim for consummate collaboration. Aiming for more consummate types of collaborative behavior leads to more effective collaboration. However, consummate collaboration as a solution to overcome social dilemmas is contingent upon certain conditions. This dissertation talks about MOPs, which involve a high level of uncertainty and complex tasks. Complex industrial products and systems (CoPS) are characterized by interconnected, often customized parts, which are frequently complex and involve high costs. These types of products tend to be produced in projects or in small quantities (Davies & Brady, 2000; Hobday, 2000). The MOPs discussed in this dissertation show resemblance in their characteristics with these CoPS. The ships built by the MOPs we studies are customized to the customer's wishes and one-off products. Hobday (1998) describes different dimensions of product complexity, ranging from more simple, standardized and routinized processes towards more complex and customized products. The more complex projects ask for different capabilities and management practices (Davies & Brady, 2000; Hobday, 1998, 2000). CoPS and simpler projects differ in the nature of the interaction between the companies and also the collaboration in the project. These differences make that the need for collaborative behavior also differs. While consummate collaboration may be beneficial for both types of projects, MOPs that are simpler and less uncertain in their processes and tasks benefit less from aiming for consummate collaboration. In these situations the costs of consummate collaboration outweigh the

benefits. Therefore, consummate collaboration is not the ultimate solution for all MOPs, it is contingent upon the complexity and uncertainty in a project.

For defining complexity in projects the definitions given by Williams (1999) can be used. This author characterizes complexity by two dimensions. The first dimension is structural uncertainty, which consists of the number of elements and the interdependence of elements. The second dimension of uncertainty is defined by uncertainty in goals and in methods (Williams, 1999). Positioning the shipbuilding MOPs on the dimension as given by Williams (1999), the structural complexity dimension is high for these projects. Both the number of elements, represented among others by the number of hierarchical levels and number and diversity of inputs, and the interdependency between the tasks and teams, are high for the MOPs studied in this dissertation. Also a high level of uncertainty, the second dimension of Williams (1999), can be seen in the shipbuilding MOPs. This level of uncertainty in goals comes from the different stakeholders in these projects with conflicting goals and objectives. In addition, the uncertainty of methods, which refers to the 'newness of technology' (Williams, 1999), is often present in these MOPs. These ships are often one-off ships, which incorporate new technology or develop new methods during the building of the ship. Increasing complexity in a project makes it more difficult to collaborate and therefore other measures have to be taken into account. In the section on managerial implications these practical solutions are discussed.

MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS

This dissertation adds to the literature on interests, specifically by looking at interests as social constructions. In the economics literature interests are assumed to be given, and associated with the individual, and self-evident to him or her (Pruitt & Kimmel, 1977; Whittle et al., 2010). However, the possibility of complete self-understanding is increasingly questioned in the twentieth century social philosophy (Gadamer, 1976; Ricoeur, 1991). Also in the behavioral sciences the concept of interests is more and more seen in a different light (e.g. Cropanzano et al., 2005; Medlin, 2006; Potter, 1996; Whittle & Mueller, 2011; Whittle et al., 2010; Woolgar, 1981). These authors argue that interests are influenced by the social context of the individual (Justice, 2006; Wildavsky, 1994). However, few authors really focus on this process of social construction of interests (Lotia & Hardy, 2008). In this dissertation I try to do exactly that, by exploring how interests are socially constructed and how these social constructions influence collaborative behaviors in inter-organizational projects. An important contribution of this dissertation is that some mechanisms of social construction of interests are identified.

A pilot study (Chapter 2) at the start of the investigation in the shipbuilding industry revealed the importance of interest perceptions in project settings. The many different companies involved in the project may have diverging goals. This situation may lead to conflicting interests (Artto et al., 2008a) and different perceptions of interests by project participants (Medlin, 2006). Multi-organizational project settings bear the characteristics of a social dilemma (Zeng & Chen, 2003). Individual participants may perceive it in their best interests to pursue the common interests, or they may perceive striving for their own interests as the best option. The main finding from this chapter is that the perceptions of interests in the social construction process are influenced by three factors. The three factors that are present at the organizational and project level are explicit and implicit instructions from the company, observed behavior during the project (Fleishman, 1988) and previous experiences from past projects (Grabher, 2002). Narrow constructions of self-interest only in line with immediate benefits to the individual project participant make it problematic to learn to collaborate more effectively.

Theoretically chapter 2 adds to the concept of construction of interests. Several authors have used the idea of interest construction (Medlin, 2006; Zeng & Chen, 2003), however, few look at how this construction process works. How are perceptions of interests influenced? From this chapter it appears that not only social observations (Fleishman, 1988) and experiences (Grabher, 2002) are important for interest construction, but also instructions that are given by the organization. Interest construction is thus a multi-layered concept that influences collaboration.

The main theoretical contribution of the dissertation is elaborated in Chapter 3. Collaboration in social dilemma settings, such as multi-organizational projects, can take on a form that lies on the continuum ranging from perfunctory to consummate type of collaboration (Blau & Scott, 1962; Williamson, 1975). Consummate collaboration seems to require a shared social construction of collaboration, which steers individuals away from self-interests (Hunt et al., 2010; Keller & Loewenstein, 2011). The social construction process that leads to these shared notions is of a linguistic nature. Therefore, this chapter explores the conditions under which discourse is most likely to lead to consummate collaboration. It is hypothesized that productive dialogue between individuals leads to accounts congruent with consummate collaboration, which in turn leads to consummate collaborative behavior. In establishing productive dialogue several conditions for discourse may play a role. This paper focuses on temporal embeddedness, equality, scope of mandate and co-location of participants as factors supporting the social construction of notions of interest conducive to consummate collaborative behavior. Managerial implications that follow from

this are that the conditions of temporal embeddedness, equality, scope of mandate and co-location are important design parameters that help shape the collaboration in a project.

Implications from chapter 3 are that different hierarchical levels need different conditions to achieve productive dialogue. Mansbridge et al (2006) define several conditions to reach productive dialogue, however, no differences are made between hierarchical levels in a company. This dissertation hypothesizes that there are differences between these levels, which make a difference in achieving consummate collaboration.

Building on the theoretical framework of Chapter 3, Chapter 4 empirically explores the links between the different conceptions of interest, ranging from perfunctory to consummate collaboration, and conditions for constructive dialogue. The impetus for this paper is the observation that experimental research shows that collaboration is much more prevalent than economic theory predicts (Camerer, 1997). But how this works "remains a mystery" (Ledyard, 1995). By studying the accounts of interests of individuals the paper aims to explore how conceptions of interests are socially constructed through discursive processes. The four conditions of temporal embeddedness, equality, scope of mandate and co-location that are hypothesized to be conducive to constructive dialogue differentiate between discursive conditions around a large-scale ship construction project. More specifically, high temporal embeddedness, equality between individuals, a broad scope of mandate, and co-location with individuals of other organization supports consummate collaboration behavior. The empirical contribution of this paper is twofold. First of all, the effect of conditions to discourse on collaborative behaviors is empirically explored. Secondly, due to the longitudinal approach this study also starts to shed light on how interest construction processes evolve over the lifecycle of a project. At lower organizational levels an increase in consummate collaboration was observed, while it is expected that higher managers decrease in their consummate types of collaborative behavior over time. Additionally, a path dependency was found in which previous experiences from other projects strongly affect the collaborative relationship with other participants later on in the project. The results indicate that project life cycles and path dependencies influence collaborative behavior over time.

The implications that can be drawn from chapter 4 are the importance of the project life cycle (Adams & Barnd, 2008) in interest construction and subsequently collaborative behavior. In the different phases of the project life cycle, different aspects of interest construction are essential. Interest construction and perceptions are thus not stable over time, but change with the project life cycle.

Chapter 5 looks at the role and position of concepts of collaboration in the mental maps of key decision makers in the shipbuilding industry. This paper elucidates the relationship between the strategic intent and collaboration between companies. In order to survive in a competitive world collaboration is essential in inter-organizational project settings (Phillips et al., 2000). Therefore the Dutch shipbuilding industry has formulated the desire to move towards more integrative collaboration. Integrative collaboration, similar to consummate collaboration, focuses on the common interest of jointly making the pie as large as possible (Larsson et al., 1998; Walton & McKersie, 1965). By using a mental mapping technique this study investigates the strategic intent of companies, with specific attention to concepts related to collaboration. Key findings are that the temporal perspective (Hunt et al., 2010) with respect to the goals (Jap, 1999) and collaboration in the strategic intent of the companies, as well as in the case of supplying companies, their dependency on the shipbuilding industry shapes collaboration in a project. This paper contributes to the understanding of the influence of the strategies of companies on collaboration in a project. Both instructions given to and informal expectations regarding the representatives in a project may translate the strategic intent in more or less collaborative behaviors, and the interaction between companies within a project may further reinforce or counter such tendencies.

Chapter 5 adds to the literature by exploring the strategy of family owned business versus non-family owned business (Astrachan, 2010). Previous research has distinguished family owned business from non-family owned business (Astrachan, 2010). This research adds to this steam by giving insight into the choice of strategy made by these companies. Family owned businesses make different choices and therefore have different strategies from non-family owned businesses. These different relate to their goals and their time horizon related to collaboration.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Several managerial implications can be drawn from this dissertation. These practical solutions are categorized in line with some of the aspects mentioned by Mattessich and Monsey (1992). These authors discuss along six categories several factors that make collaboration work. Here only the factors that are relevant for this research are used. At the end of each factor a solution for moving towards consummate collaboration is mentioned:

1. *History of collaboration*

   First of all, a history of collaborating together creates understanding and expectations about the interaction between companies and individuals. As discussed in this dissertation the shadow of

the past creates opportunities, but may also form hindrances for future collaboration (Rooks et al., 2000).

➔ Individual relationships: these are essential in moving towards consummate collaboration and should be created and stimulated by for example using integration managers. These individuals are able to create a relationship that involves giving and taking, which is needed for consummate collaboration. A caveat is that these relationships can easily be broken if employees change roles or companies.

2. *Members see collaboration as in their self-interest*

   Participating individuals and companies have to believe that they will benefit from involvement in collaboration with other individuals. Thus collaboration should be satisfying their own interests, and at the same time serve the collective interests. In this situation collaboration would be in line with both the collective and the self-interests. Important here is also another factor that is mentioned by Mattessich and Monsey (1992), namely multiple layers of participation. If actors at all hierarchical layers participate in consummate collaborative behavior it is more likely to work than if only the managers act in this way.

➔ Instructing employees: higher management levels often see these longer term collective interest as parallel to their self-interests. However, lower-level individuals may not. Therefore, instructing employees in line with behaviors that aim at solving problems, finding solutions that benefit the collective etc. will create behavior that is in line with consummate collaboration.

3. *Members share a stake in process and outcome*

   In order for individuals to be involved with a group they should share a stake in both the process (in the context of this dissertation: building the ship), as well as in the end result.

➔ Early stage involvement of subcontractors: this makes subcontractors part of the whole process and make them feel that they can help in making decisions that are beneficial for all parties (including themselves). Helping in making these decisions in turn creates self-interests that are more in line with the collective interests.

➔ Combined meetings between project life cycle phases: integration individuals between different departments and different phases in the project life cycle gives them insight in the consequences of their own actions. This makes it easier to define their interests in a way that takes these consequences into account and helps to move towards behavior that satisfies the collective interests. For example, purchasing-engineering meetings can be initiated.

4. *Open communication*

   Communication is very important in collaboration. Hardy et al (2005) discuss the importance of language in effective collaboration. How the communication takes place shapes the interests and consequently the collaborative behavior in projects.

➔ Co-location: this is very important to facilitate communication and move towards consummate collaboration. The collective interests become clearer when individuals work at the same location, which makes it easier to align the self-interests with these collective interests.

➔ Discourse: the language and accounts that individuals use determine the interests of individuals. Therefore it is important to take this notion into account. While this may seem to be a "soft" factor, consciously promoting language and the accounts that emphasize collective interests help individuals to be aware of these interests and to construe self-interests commensurate with consummate collaboration.

5. *Shared vision*

   Partners that collaborate need to have a shared vision and clear objectives and goals to work towards (Jap, 1999).

➔ Match strategies: the strategies of the different companies working together should match with respect to their perspective on collaboration. This match should be present with respect to the importance of collaboration and how to collaborate. Partnerships are a different form of collaboration than market relationships. This is also related to the time horizon that the companies use. It is difficult to align a long term perspective with short term perspectives. Therefore, companies should try to find equivalent companies with similar perspectives on collaboration. Collaborative relationships are then easier to establish.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This dissertation has started to explore the social construction of interests, but unavoidably still many aspects remain unexplored. For example, how do interests constructions evolve across projects? Can shared conceptions of interests commensurate with consummate collaboration be carried forward from one project to the next? Under what conditions does this happen, and under what conditions not? In addition, more insights into the development of interests over time are needed. This dissertation took a longitudinal approach of eighteen months in one of the papers, but it might be interesting and necessary to explore a project from the beginning, the earliest contract

negotiations, until the end. How do interests change during a project and how does this affect the collaboration in this project, but maybe also in future projects?

One important limitation of this dissertation is that the findings on interests are based exclusively on interviews. It could be questioned to what extent sensitive issues like conflicts of interests can reliably be gauged in interviews. There is a risk that interviewees express adherence to collaborative stances (consummate and integrative types of collaboration), while in reality they focus on their own interests. It is difficult to exclude that in some situations a declared collaborative approach may be just verbal behavior.

Additionally, I have to be careful in generalizing the results to other industries. The shipbuilding sector is an industry characterized by companies that stay in the industry for a long time, and many suppliers are also dedicated to the sector. This commitment may have various effects. On the one hand, it may lead to conservatism, making it difficult to change patterns of behavior that are deeply rooted in a common history. On the other hand, the stability of the composition of players in the sector should also make it easier to recognize the shared interests. However, moving towards consummate collaboration is possible only when supported by the strategies of the firms involved. New definitions of the strategic roles and even identities of both the shipyards and the contractors are called for. More insights into how companies (in the shipbuilding industry as well as elsewhere) come to define and change their strategic identities are therefore needed, and this seems a promising direction for future research.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

PROTOCOL: LEARNING TO COLLABORATE IN MULTI-ORGANIZATIONAL PROJECTS (CHAPTER 2)

Questions Round I:

Own strengths and weaknesses

1.1 Communication

- What are, in your opinion, the strong/weak points of the internal communication in your department/company?
- Can you give examples of these strong and weak points?
- What are, in your opinion, the strong/weak points of the external communication of your department/company?
- Can you give examples of these strong and weak points?

1.2 Dependency

- On what parties are (were) you dependent during the construction, and caused this dependence?
- Could you exert influence on these parties?
- Did this dependence have a negative or positive influence on your work?

Quality of the relationships

2.1 Internal

- On what departments do you depend the most, and what caused this dependency?
- What do you think of the quality of those relations? (positive and/or negative)
- Can you give examples illustrating the quality of the relationships?

2.2 External

- On what external companies do you depend the most, and what caused this dependency?
- What do you think of the quality of those relations? (positive and/or negative)
- Can you give examples illustrating the quality of the relationships?

2.3 Interests

- Are there any conflicting interests between your company and the external companies that (have) influenced the construction process? If so, what conflicts were there and how were they handled?

2.4 Knowledge and information

- Did you receive the necessary information from external parties on time? If not, how was that handled?
- Did external companies share specific knowledge with your company when it could be relevant? And vice versa?

<u>Threats</u>

- Can you indicate if and how the not so good performance of other parties had a negative influence on the performance of your company/department?
  (for example: not keeping to agreements, substandard work, mismatch between output from other parties which serves as input to you)
- Can you give an example of the positive and negative results of the cooperation between the different parties/departments in this project?

<u>Experience of the cooperation</u>

- What is your personal feeling regarding the cooperation so far?
- Do you think that the feelings concerning other companies before the start of this project have influenced the way in which people/companies cooperated? And which feelings were that?
- Can you exemplify which events have, positively or negatively, influenced the personal relations?

Financial aspects

- Is it possible that the feasibility of the scope of your tender has played a part in the way in which companies worked together?
- Is it possible that, as a consequence of the discrepancy between the offered scope and the actual workload, the cooperation with other companies was put under pressure?
- Can this discrepancy arise because of yourself or other parties, and can you exemplify this?

Improvement

6.1 Own organization

- Can you exemplify what your own organization (company or department) should improve to improve the cooperation with other parties?
- How do you think these improvements can be implemented and who is responsible for the development and implementation of these improvements?

6.1 Temporary Project Organisation

- Can you exemplify what needs to be improved in the project organization (Construction numbers) in order to improve the cooperation with the involved parties?
- How do you think those improvements should be implemented and who is responsible for the development and implementation of these improvements?

6.2 Customer

- What could the customer change/improve in order to improve the cooperation between the involved parties?

Questions Round II:

General

1. Can you tell me something about your work?
2. What do you like about the way people and companies cooperate in this project?
3. How would you describe the way people work?

Interests

4. What are your goals during the project; what do you have to produce, to what extent were you able to influence or involved in the formulation of these goals?
5. At what level (who) are those goals formulated (level of the individual, organization or project)?
6. What are the differences in goals between parties/departments? How do these differences influence the collaboration in the project?
7. To what extent are the consequences for future projects taken into account?
8. Whom do you identify most strongly with / with what group do you feel most connected with (team/work floor/own organization/project team/department) and why?

Satisfaction

9. To what extent are you satisfied with the cooperation within this project?
10. Where can improvement be obtained and how would you approach that?

PROTOCOL: ACCOUNTS OF INTEREST AND COLLABORATIVE BEHAVIOR IN PROJECTS (CHAPTER 4)

Questions Round I:

Interests

1. What is your contribution in the project?

2. How would you define your interest in this project?
   For example:
   a. Cooperative/non-cooperative
   b. Own interest/organizational interests/project interests
   c. Profit/ship

   Ask: when is this project for you as an individual a success? Why? (role/career in the company, role within the project, social and economic factors). Do you also recognize this with others?

3. What is the interest of the company that you represent?
   Ask: how does this interest compare itself to your own interests? Is the interest of your company clear (short term/long term)? Did the company made clear how you are supposed to serve your company's interests?

4. Can you give an example of a situation in which your own interest or the interests of your company would conflict with the interests of this project?

5. Is it clear to you what the interests of the other parties in this project are?
   How do you know? (observations, experiences, "common knowledge" etc.)

6. Do you see conflicts of interests? Do you see congruence in the interests?
   Can you give examples? What could be a solution to a situation with conflicts of interests? Why would this be a solution?

7. How do you portray your interest in this project?

Identity

1. How long do you work for this company? Do you feel a strong commitment?
2. With whom do you feel most connected (which group of people)? Why?
3. Is there something like a "we-feeling" at the parties within this project?
4. Is there something like a "we-feeling" at the companies in the shipbuilding industry?
5. How do you see the future of the shipbuilding industry in the Netherlands? What is needed to stay successful, or even to survive?
6. Are there people we should interview according to you?

Questions Round II:

1. Did your role change in comparison to the beginning of the project?

Collaboration

2. With which parties (companies) do you usually collaborate?
3. What has changed (improved/decreased) in the collaboration with company x, y (mentioned at 3)?
4. Can you give examples of what goes well in the collaboration with company x, y (mentioned at 3)?
5. Can you give examples of what does not go as well in the collaboration with company x, y (mentioned at 3)?

(long-term interest, initiative and responsibility, go beyond contract, flexibility, equality, co-location)

Discourse

6. To which extent do you have to discuss with others concerning (within and outside your company) a good execution of your job?
   For example: you have to make a choice between 2 alternative solutions.
7. To which extent are these conversations on the basis of equality? How does that follow?

8. Does it make a difference if you have worked previously with somebody of a company before? How does this affect your collaboration?
9. Does it make a difference if you expect to work with a person or company in the future? How does this affect your collaboration?
10. Have you got enough freedom to fill in your job in consultation with others? Do you think the people you talk to feel the same?
11. With whom do you discuss your approach (and vice versa)?
12. *Management*: do you encourage people to conform to a certain approach?
13. *Work floor*: are you being encouraged by management to carry out your work in a certain way?

Interests

14. When is the project a success for your company?
15. When is the project a success for you personally?

PROTOCOL: STRATEGIC MENTAL MAPS IN PROJECTS (CHAPTER 5)

Strategic direction:

1. Can you shortly indicate what the strategy of your company is?
   a. Question upwards to what the ultimate goal(s) is?
   b. Ask about the relationships between the goals.
   c. Question downwards which means are necessary to reach the goal(s)
   d. Ask about the relationships between the means.

2. What makes your strategy change?
   a. Projects, parties: ask how these influence the strategy.

Collaboration:

3. What is the role of collaboration and competition in your strategy?
   a. Ask how collaboration and competition affect each other.

4. What is the influence of working in projects on your strategy?
   a. Ask about the differences in strategies in different sectors.

Personal goals:

5. What are your personal drives?
   a. Ask how these personal drives relate to the company's goal(s).

Shipbuilding industry:

6. Do you expect changes in how the shipbuilding industry works in the near or further future?

APPENDIX II: CODING EXAMPLE